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The Indiana Jewish

Post & Opinion

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UNFORTUNATE PHOTO? — When and if Mrs. Clinton is nominated to run for the Senate from New York this photo with Suha Arafat, wife of Yasir Arafat, could play a role. Also Mrs. Clinton had come out for a Palestinian State but that is the position of most American Jews according to the latest poll.



3,900 Jewish foundations but don't work together

SAN FRANCISCO — Jewish foundations were criticized in an article in The Chronicle of Philanthropy for working in isolation with each other and thus missing opportunities to share information and work together on common interests.

A new report, financed by a group of Jewish foundations, found that there is a lack of professional staff members or operations in place to review grants and evaluate their effectiveness. Also that numerous Jewish foundations are independently collecting and analyzing information about the same issues, often unaware that they were exploring the same topics, according to the Institute for Jewish and Community Research here.

"There is a breakdown in the system, a disconnect, between the desire to improve and change the quality of Jewish life and the realization of that goal," the report states. "The switching stations for ideas, purposes, and programs and the money to support them do not exist in most local communities and at the national level."

The report points to three areas where improvement is needed; Collection and dissemination of information, lack of grant-making networks and insufficient staff.

The criticism comes as the number of Jewish foundations and the size of their assets are growing, with some 3,900 foundations now focussing on Jewish causes compared with 400 less only three years ago. While asset figures are hard to come by, the report states that the 20 largest Jewish foundations provided \$220-million in grants in 1994 as against \$300 million by the end of this year and that there are a total of 3,502 foundations making grants to Jewish causes.

A caution that the survey data should not be interpreted as statistically representative but could be viewed as trend data was issued because only five percent, or 176 recipients, returned the survey.

The low response rate was interpreted as an indication of the "individualistic and private" nature of Jewish philanthropists.

One of the report's authors, Gary Tobin, said that greater interaction and communication among foundations, federations, and other Jewish philanthropic groups could help break down some of that individualism. In fact, Charles Bronfman has called for the creation of a new center that would serve as a clearing-house for information on Jewish philanthropy and would unite the nation's sprawling array of Jewish federations, foundations and individual donors. His own foundation helped underwrite the report which is available from the institute for Jewish and Community Research, 140 Balboa St., San Francisco 94118.



NOT IN ISRAEL — Jordan's King Abdullah bin Al-Hussein, right, is tendered the plaque which shows that he has planted a tree in Central Park under auspices of the Jewish National Fund which obviously must have preferred that he do so in one of the JNF forests in Israel, but that may be a step for the future. With him are Rita H. Salfed, president of the JNF Greater New York Region, and from left NYC Parks Commissioner Henry J. Stern and Israel's Consul General Shmuel Sisso.

Remembering my dad, Bud Mossler

By NANCY TAFFEL

There were two occasions that I met someone important ahead of my father. He was blown away both times.

I walked around nine holes of golf with Bob Hope. He visited our country club the week he appeared at the Indiana State Fair. I asked Bob whether he or Bing Crosby was the better golfer. He said, "Who's Bing?!"

At lunchtime, Bob was introduced to my dad, then president of the Broadmoor Country Club. When I approached the table, Bob gave me a hug. He wondered why I didn't mention I was the president's daughter. I wondered why I should have. Dad was shocked.

On a rabbinical search one year, dad came back home relating an unusual coincidence. During the interview, Rabbi Maurice Davis asked if he was Nancy Mossler's father. Dad was dumbfounded. Rabbi Davis ran the Oconomoc, Wis. UAHC camp and I was the first Hoosier he ever met. Years later he conducted my marriage ceremony and told

our wedding guests of the unusual event.

I learned about tipping early. At the Columbia Club, a private club downtown, I came out from dinner with the money left at the table. I thought dad had forgotten his change. He was embarrassed that the waitress who had taken care of us that evening didn't get a tip. He fussed at me explicitly. I haven't forgotten to tip since then.

Even earlier than the tipping experience, I learned how to charge. My brother was supposed to meet me at a bus stop because we were moving. Dad had enlisted in the Army. Jim did not show up. At the tender age of 6, I got on the bus and told the driver my destination.

The bus driver asked me for the dime fare. Having no money, I piped, "Charge it to daddy, he has an account at Wasson's! When my mother picked me up, she offered him the dime. He wouldn't take it. He said he hadn't laughed so much since he started driving buses. Two days later, the

event was printed in our local daily paper under "Street Scenes." It was the first time I was in print since my birth announcement.

Dad's recollections as a Georgian, the eventual home of his daughter, was Army basic training at Fort Benning. Not good! Coincidentally, my husband did the same thing there about 15 years later. Those were days they both wanted to forget. I'm proud of dad for enlisting even though we lived in many government housing, motels and tiny places during the war. He did his patriotic duty big time!

My Army brat days conversations revolved around food. One day my mother served me raisin bran. My dad commented in a silly manner, "If it crawls, it's not a raisin!" I pushed the plate away and have never had a raisin since. I've also avoided dates, olives and any other black colored food that remotely resembles a crawly creature!

Dad told everyone that I buttered my bread on both sides during the days of ration-



Nancy Taffel, her dad, Bud Mossler after her wedding with Dorothy Miller and Jesse Gerber.

ing. I still have an undying love of butter — or fat-free margarine — and any kind of bread imaginable.

As a teenager, I charged a present to dad for Father's Day — a tie of course. I accidentally left it in a bathroom. Coming home on the bus, I realized the problem too late. A month later he saw it on his bill. He said it was the first and only Father's Day present he never got that he had to pay for!!

Dad was an excellent fund raiser for all organizations. His friends used to say,

"Whenever I see your father, he's asking me for money." Only in my adult life did I realize it was a compliment to his fund raising abilities for all important causes. He even had me type letters to American presidents for Israel and American Jewish issues. Dad, I'm e-mailing these people now. It's a lot easier and faster! And Super Sundays are the new way to raise funds.

Not long after I got my driver's license, I quietly paid a ticket. He found out when he got my duplicate license for

Continued on page 7

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Town Crier

By G.M. COHEN

The way that the city has been taken over by the Rev. Billy Graham should serve as a lesson for the local Jewish community. Indianapolis has many effective pastors and priests who can galvanize their congregants and others in no less a way than can Pastor Graham, yet it took him to actually turn the religious community almost into like a football game crowd and as anyone could have told did it in a big way, although aided by a great publicity campaign.

Yet there is a lesson here for the Indianapolis Jewish community. Just as the Christian churches and their pastors, Indianapolis has top rabbis who know how to move their congregants to great devotion, but that improvements in observing religious obligations could be improved goes without question. So a Jewish Billy Graham could make a difference, and there are a number of them and we are willing to name them.

The point is that there has not been an outside rabbi brought to address the community, of whatever background in years. Were Rabbi Yitz Greenberg to be brought to the city, or for that matter any one of a number of leading rabbis of national note who know how to get the Jewish message across, it could and should make a difference.

The Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation has a successful forum of nationally-known speakers for its forum, from which Jewish speakers are barred by the bequest which make it possible but as far as a comparable forum of noted Jewish authorities that is only a hoped-for possibility. There are families in the city, as in the case of the Bloch family which provided for the IHC forum, who could honor themselves or a late member by establishing a Jewish counterpart to the Bloch forum, and hopefully such will become in the near future a fixture of the Jewish community. It could make a difference, a needed difference if we may say so.

'New tradition' helping many

HAMMOND — About 10 members of Temple Beth-El here spent Sunday participating in a Habitat For

Humanity project, putting in several hours in a sweltering house doing drywall work.

The project was part of their "Mitzvah Day," which is becoming a new tradition among synagogues.

Habitat For Humanity rehabs homes for people who cannot get bank loans to finance the work. In this case, a vacant house donated by Mercantile National Bank.

Even a couple of the teenagers were helping put the walls together.

Other members did some gardening work at First United Methodist Church, which is shared by Temple Beth-El.

Temple members that afternoon held a picnic at a park for the Lake County Association for the Retarded. They also visited residents at a nursing home in Dyer.

Mitzvah Day concluded with a supper and musical program featuring a singer doing songs in Hebrew, Yiddish and English.

Congregation celebrates 150th year

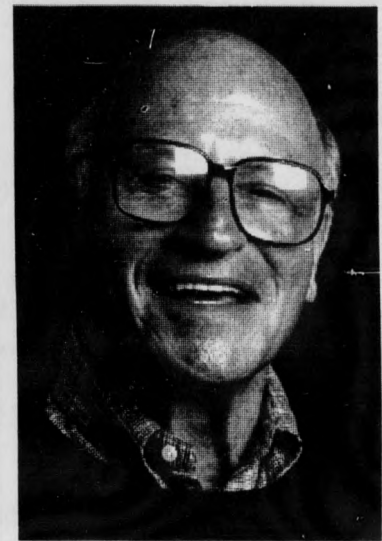
WEST LAFAYETTE — Temple Israel's 135 member families and its spiritual leader, Rabbi Samuel I. Weingart, are preparing for the June 10-12 weekend of celebration for the congregation's 150 years of commitment to Judaism.

Three days of special events will mark the celebration, thanks to the work of the anniversary committee, chaired by Ralph L. Morris. There will be a Community Night, open to the public, with an interreligious discussion of community service and social action, Friday night and Saturday morning Shabbat services, and a gala dinner-dance for current and former members.

Community Night speakers Friday will include Al Vorspan, senior vice president emeritus of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and former director of



Rabbi Samuel Weingart



Al Vorspan

the Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism. He will speak on "The Role of Religion in Achieving Social Justice in Our Society — A Frank Look at Our Interreligious Relations."

Vorspan will deliver a sermon Saturday on "Sea

Changes in Social Action."

Morris is a descendant of one of the Temple's founders, Jacob Mayer. Mayer and about 19 other Jewish men and their families formed an association called Ahavath Achim, or "brotherly love," on April 27,

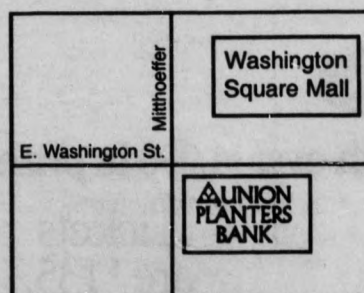
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Oral histories to spotlight Etz Chaim, Sephardim

By ED STATTMANN

Several members of Etz Chaim Sephardic Congregation will share their histories as direct descendants of the congregation's founders through an oral history project.

The project is funded by a \$2,500 Indiana Heritage Research grant to the Indiana Jewish Historical Society co-sponsored by the Indiana Humanities Council and the Indiana Historical Society.

Irit Erez-Boukai, a member of the congregation and a board member of the Indiana

Jewish Historical Society will interview between five and ten members of Etz Chaim, she said. The narrators will be chosen by the congregation, she said.

She said she will do a pre-interview with each narrator and take notes upon which to build a more formal interview that she will tape and later have transcribed.

Erez Boukai said the budget for the work doesn't cover transcriptions, but she hopes the Federation will subsidize those costs... "because the In-

diana Jewish Historical Society is a very non-profit organization."

Eventually, the transcripts will be deposited in a few locations, including the archives of the Indiana Historical Society the oral history center at Indiana University-

Bloomington and the teachers' resource center at the Bureau of Jewish Education. Etz Chaim, of course, will also get a copy. Each narrator also will get a copy of his or her tape and transcript. Sylvia Cohen, Etz Chaim's historian, will

help with the project, Erez-Boukai said.

Besides the transcripts and tapes there will be a publication next year by the Indiana Jewish Historical Society devoted to Etz Chaim, she said. She and the Etz Chaim Sisterhood also will assemble an exhibit of archival photos about the congregation.

She said Etz Chaim is both like and unlike other Sephardic congregations around the world. It is typical in that Sephardic Jews everywhere establish their own congregations rather than just vanishing into the larger Jewish community. It is atypical in that the Sephardim in Indianapolis did become very entwined with the local Ashkenazic Jews and married into their community.

Indianapolis Sephardim were mainly from Salonika, Greece, and Monastir, Macedonia, she said.

Her narrators will all be people who were born and grew up in Indianapolis, at first on the south side, before

the Jewish community migrated to its present neighborhoods, mainly in the 46260 zip code.

Erez-Boukai said she and her husband had previously lived in upstate New York where there was no Sephardic synagogue and "when we heard there was a Sephardic synagogue in the city, we were thrilled." His family descends from Jews of Spain who settled in Syria and Constantinople, hers from Europe and Yemen.

She said the Indiana Humanities Council was enthused about her grant proposal because the council members realize the congregation has individuals who have contributed to the development of the city and the state and because they are a unique minority within a minority who have preserved their heritage, including praying in Ladino every shabbat.

Erez-Boukai has previously researched the Jews of Arab countries and Jews of the

Continued on page 6

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Congregation

Continued from page 3

1849. Its first action was to appoint a committee of three to serve as trustees to locate and buy a site for sacred burial grounds. Other founders were Moses Amberg, Levi Brush, Joseph Danziger, Isaac Faust, Martin Hollstein, Lewis Price, and Solomon Wise. Most of the earliest Jewish settlers in Tippecanoe County emigrated from Bavaria, Germany.

At first, the congregation met in members' homes, then in several buildings in downtown Lafayette, but in 1867 they built their first synagogue at 17 South Seventh Street, where a Unitarian Universalist Church now stands. The building is claimed to be the oldest standing building in Indiana that a Jewish congregation built for worship.

In 1969 the congregation worshipped for the last time on Seventh Street, and moved to their new building on Cumberland Avenue in West Lafayette. In 1982 the Seventh Street building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The original member families of Ahavath Achim practiced the traditional Orthodox rituals, but after Isaac Mayer Wise, a proponent of Reform Judaism, visited the congregation in 1860, more members voiced support for reforming, or modernizing, the worship services. When Wise founded the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in 1873, Ahavath Achim became a founding member of the organization. The congregation's 1876 constitution called for further reforms, such as allowing men and women to worship together. During the 1880s, dissension among the member families, including many who had recently emigrated from Russia and Poland, led to some leaving the congregation to form a synagogue that practiced traditional worship services and rituals.

In 1889, the Sons of Abraham, the second Jewish congregation in Lafayette,

formed. Both congregations remain active in the Greater Lafayette community.

In 1919 Ahavath Achim adopted its present name, Temple Israel.

Most of the rabbis who served Ahavath Achim arrived from Chicago or Cincinnati's Hebrew Union College. Some stayed briefly; many for only a year. The congregation often obtained a rabbi who had recently completed rabbinical training or one who would soon be ready for retirement. Only three have served for more than 10 years: Meyer H. Simon (1934-49), Burton Levinson (1966-82), and Samuel Weingart (1987-present).

Rabbi Simon served the congregation through times of economic stress, social upheaval, and World War II. The congregation authorized the extension of the rabbi's service to Purdue University students, in neighboring West Lafayette. From a small Jewish student club in 1935, B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation grew to more than 500 Jewish students under Rabbi Simon's direction.

In 1968, during Rabbi Levinson's tenure, the congregation received a 200-year-old Torah that the British underground had rescued from the Nazis during the war. Reportedly, the British bought about 1,000 Czechoslovakian Torah scrolls. The congregation and Rabbi Levinson were extremely proud to add these sacred scrolls to their Torah collection.

Levinson retired in 1982 and became Temple Israel's sole rabbi emeritus. Beloved by his congregation, he stayed in West Lafayette during his retirement and is buried in the Jewish Cemetery secured by the congregation's original founders.

Rabbi Weingart joined the congregation in 1987. In contrast to his mild manner, his serious commitment to Israel and social action has played out through fiery sermons from the pulpit on "Who Is a

Continued on next page

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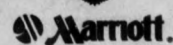
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Congregation

Continued from prev. page

Jew?" and "The Dangers of Religious Fundamentalism" to guest editorials in the local newspaper on abortion rights and peace in the Middle East.

In the early 1990s, congregants once again wrestled and debated over such "new" and "old" Reform Judaism issues as the amount of Hebrew in worship ser-

vices, rabbinical responsibilities, organ versus contemporary folk music, and intermarriage.

History

Continued from page 4
Lafayette-West Lafayette community.

She hopes the Etz Chaim project will be just the beginning of oral history projects about aspects of the Indianapolis Jewish community, she said.

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More Jewish giggles

Fractured phrases

Does Tu B'shevat occur before Three B'shevat?

Does Tisha B'Av have a higher priority than Tisha B'low?

Shavu-oat - cereal grain shot from Shofars

Bimah - yuppy car

Hanukkah gelt - a Jewish neutered horse, born on the 25th of Kislev

Tu B'shevat - the holiday immediately before "3" B'shevat

Purim - what the bartender says in March

A certain Jewish gentleman was having a run of very bad luck.

Among other misfortunes, his wife was divorcing him, his mother-in-law was foreclosing on the mortgage on his house, his car was repossessed, and his daughter was getting her name changed. His business was in the process of going bankrupt.

He decided to end it all and went to the kitchen to find a carving knife with which to slash his wrists. As he picked up the knife, he realized he

was hungry. Why die on an empty stomach? He grabbed a bagel, sliced it in half and buttered it.

He was just raising it to his mouth when it slipped out of his hand, flipped over a few times on its way to the floor

and landed BUTTER SIDE UP !!

As his kitchen was car-

Continued on page 9

Mossler

Continued from page 2
a trip. And he wondered why I didn't ask him for the money...

Dad was amazed that I got engaged in a week's time to someone from Atlanta. I had just graduated from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, so his comment was: try the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. I'm now a columnist for the Jewish Georgian.

Dad and mom came to visit for all special occasions as brisses, baby namings, bar mitzvahs, broken legs, etc! He was never very religious, but he participated. I still remember him handing my husband the Torah who handed it to my son. It was the first time my dad or my husband ever touched the Torah! Food again was an issue. He was not thrilled when Jay wanted us to keep kosher. Dad straightened us out. We have one section for kosher items.

While visiting the Sunny South, dad renewed acquaintances with some insurance, golfing, and/or Army buddies. My mother (Shirley) reunited with a schoolmate in my new hometown!

Dad helped me get two fabulous summer jobs. One was for a friend of his, Charles Kaufman of the Eastern Sun newspaper. I had the delightful opportunity to learn all aspects of publishing from interviewing for stories to proof-reading.

The other job was with the Shane Company. The original owner, Claude Shane, had me doing everything from sales to stocking merchandise. It's now a major company with four locations in Atlanta alone.

Speaking of major Indiana companies, the Simon Property Group has five (soon six) malls in Georgia. Mom and dad took me to a Mel Simon Race Day party where I met Ann Landers. It was convenient having a father that knew everyone in town!

Dad is now in that golf club in the sky. He's probably still selling insurance and asking for contributions. I hope he is remembering some of these same events this Father's Day with fondness. I've forgiven him about turning me off of raisins. I hope he's forgiven me about losing his tie!

Kid's Corner

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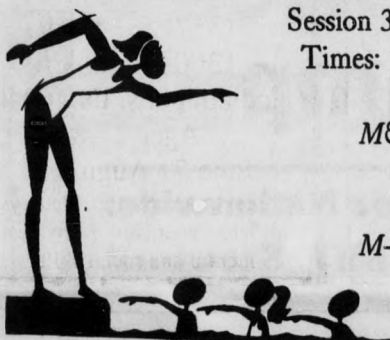
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M-F 7:30-9 pm; S/S 2-5 pm

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Critic's Corner

Footlite finds its forte in 'Penzance'

By CHARLES EPSTEIN

The presentation of *The Pirates of Penzance* by Footlite Musicals was not only a pleasant surprise, but a definite highlight for many seasons to



come. To expect excellence from a community theater for

a very difficult operetta is ridiculous, especially an operetta created by Sir William S. Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan. What I saw at the Hedback Theater, home of Footlite Musicals, exceeded all expectations.

I have a thorough background in Gilbert & Sullivan. In fact, I have even visited Penzance on the lower coast of England, where it is said the pirates still exist. Only now they are called lawyers and shopkeepers. I have seen many D'Oyly Carte productions, some starring the fan-

tastic Martyn Green. I have attended the whole repertoire of the American Savoyards in New York City. So when I see "an authentic" version of any Gilbert & Sullivan I am thrilled. Footlite Musicals accomplished this amazing feat, rivaling any other production I have seen of *The Pirates of Penzance*.

Since Gilbert & Sullivan's operettas are not done frequently, their unusual style is not seen. The beat, the rhythm, the delivery of dialogue and lyrics all march to a different drummer. How-

ever, everything is so robustly entertaining. So again I must repeat how amazed I was when the essence was truly captured by cast, crew and staff of Footlite. What research must have been involved.

Credits for this delightful show are enormous. Camilla Upchurch directed with the utmost speed and "delicate" comedy. Choreographer Christopher Noffke took us right back to the original stupendous and outrageous dances. All of his work was outstanding. The policemen almost stole the show. The right style of humor abounded right down to the curlicue mustaches and "Chaplinesque" hilarious prancing. Christopher Noffke also performed as a pirate in the first act and as a policeman in the second. It was not hard to identify him. He was the

dancer with the highest elevation.

It was also astonishing how the cast took to the unusual style. It was obvious that they were having fun. That is what G&S is all about. It takes superior voices to sing Sullivan's music. It also takes a very nimble tongue to deliver Gilbert's lyrics. This talented cast accepted the challenge and thoroughly entertained the audience in the style meant to be.


Tim Spradlin was an imposing Frederic, the boy indentured to the pirates and having the misfortune of being born on Feb. 29. Operatic Kathleen Horrigan was his love interest. She ran through Sullivan's music like she was born to it. And Camilla Upchurch kept them kissing interminably.

Vonda Fuhrman, as Ruth, the pirates' maid of all work, relinquished her beautiful voice for comic characterization. Phil Crisswell added to the mood as the Sergeant of Police.

But the characterization of R. Brian Noffe as the major-general was brilliant, reminiscent of the great Martyn Green. He was stupendous as he performed with the dignity

Continued on next page

Kid's Corner




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S. Rosenfeld graduates as valedictorian

SOUTH BEND — Shalom Rosenfeld of Indianapolis will graduate as valedictorian this year at Rabbi Naftali Riff Yeshiva here.

Rosenfeld earned a grade-point average of 4.0 at this religious high school, has been on the distinguished honor roll all four years and is a National Merit Scholarship finalist.

He has said he plans to pursue rabbinical studies at the Rabbi Riff Rabbinical College here and is also considering a career as a biomedical engineer.

He tutors remedial students and instructs an ethics class at the school.

His parents are Monica and Dr. Stephen Rosenfeld of Indianapolis.

Shuls welcome worshippers

NEW YORK — Leaders of women's organizations with Orthodox synagogues throughout America have received brochures and letters outlining a new hospitality program.

The three prongs of the project are welcoming and expanding the circle of guests at Shabbat tables in homes; ensuring that the Shul is a true "house of ingathering" by making all who come feel truly wanted and offering

Shabbat meals to out-of-town visitors.

Guidelines and posters are being offered to all participating communities, as well as flyers for the kick-off were offered April 30/May 1, when Shabbat tables throughout America will host guests simultaneously. Rabbis of Orthodox Union congregation spoke on the subject of Hachnassat Orchim on the Shabbat preceding the April 30/May 1 weekend.

Giggles

Continued from page 7

peted with a lovely bit of \$100 a yard cloth of gold, he thought there must be some significance to this apparently random fluke of Nature. He put his suicide plans on hold and raced off to the synagogue where he breathlessly related the whole story to the rabbi.

"Rabbi, d'you think it's a sign from God that my luck is going to change? Please, Rabbi, tell me the meaning of the sign!"

The rabbi responded: "My Son, I must consult the Holy Books. I must discuss this with the learned men. Put \$100 in the collection for the poor and come back on Tuesday, when all will be revealed."

He did as he was asked and walked home a lighter

and somewhat happier man.

Now he was on tenterhooks until Tuesday.

He couldn't sleep wondering about the significance of the Bagel which defied the Law of Selective Gravity.

The hours dragged past slowly until finally Tuesday morning arrived and he rushed once more to the synagogue.

"Rabbi! Rabbi! You remember me! The man with the bad luck and the bagel.

Tell me, Rabbi, have you solved the significance of the sign?" "My Son, I have consulted the Holy Books and the Ancient Wisdom, I have discussed at great length with the learned men what happened with the bagel, and I am sure we have reached the meaning of the sign."

"Tell me Rabbi! Tell me!"

"You buttered it on the wrong side, you schlemiel!"

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Charlie

Continued from prev. page
and slapstick required.

There are so many people to recognize for their tremendous contributions. Brenda Upchurch's sets were distinguished. Conductor Larry Bonebright got the most from his pit orchestra. Stage manager Alice Larson kept the chaos to a minimum. Mark

Allstat's lighting was superb. And special plaudits to everyone I haven't mentioned.

Footlite Musicals' next season cannot possibly surpass this production of *The Pirate of Penzance*, however some biggies are scheduled. I am definitely looking forward to *Kiss Me Kate*; *She Loves Me*; *Li'l Abner* and *Big*.

Kid's Corner

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Every Saturday at 1 PM in June and July. Some of the fun activities you can look forward to are a Star Wars party, meeting Clifford, seeing animals from The Indianapolis Zoo, a treasure hunt and more! **First 100 kids to attend get a free Borders Explorers T-shirt.** Your official password to enter is: **PLANETARY!**



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Jewish Post & Opinion

Not a defeat, maybe

While the abdication of responsibility by the Reform rabbinate in rejecting an attempt to institute some form of obligation in Reform may seem like a defeat by those who had hoped to bring guidelines into observance, in the long run it will result in actually the opposite.

The leaders of the Reform rabbinate, its president, and others who recognized that Judaism without observance was not a religion but rather a social society may in the long run become successful in their attempt to introduce obligation into Reform. In other words the defeat at Pittsburgh may have been just what was needed to bring about the recognition the leadership sought to achieve.

Reform Jews are no different from Orthodox and Conservative Jews and all are products of the same American society although the Orthodox and Conservative Jews do recognize their obligations whether or not they observe them.

One thing that may be said for Reform is that if their rabbis are any example, is that no one seems to be truly sure of themselves. The same cannot be said of Orthodox rabbis although probably not of Conservative rabbis.

Reform deserves credit for seeking change even though the attempt at Pittsburgh died aborning. In fact it probably will be that the very defeat was a necessary step that will convince everyone. Not only that but had the 10 principles been adopted they very well could not have made possible the necessary changes they called for.

Russian Israeli Jews are told no by Canada

TORONTO — Canada is telling Israelis that she does not want them, especially if they were originally from Russia. Last year only 24 were admitted as 625 others were rejected. While the Israelis who are told by Canada to stay home are disappointed, not so Israel. She has contended that there is no such thing as an Israeli refugee.

The acceptance rate peaked in 1994 as one out of two of the Israelis was accepted.

The Israelis seeking entry have been claiming that Israel persecutes its immigrants.

Since 1989 when the first wave of Jews were allowed to leave the Soviet Union Israel has been trying to persuade Canada that ex-Soviets are taking advantage of the Law of Return to springboard to this country.

To qualify as refugees here newcomers must prove a well-founded fear of persecution should they be returned to Israel.

Jewish Academy for everybody

DETROIT — The new Jewish high school, the Jewish Academy of Metropolitan Detroit, which hopes to open in fall 2000 for students of all Jewish persuasions, made a step forward as Rabbi Leon Buckman, of Milwaukee, has

been named headmaster. He studied school administration at the University of Judaism in Los Angeles and has taken a "principles" course at Harvard University's graduate school of education.

Tony Leon leads the opposition

JOHANNESBURG — A Jewish legislator is poised to be the first Jew in the history of South Africa's Parliament

to become leader of the opposition. He is Tony Leon of the Democratic Party.

Editor's Chair

For whatever reason or reasons The P-O seems to be being ignored by those who make decisions that concern us.

We will never forgive whoever it was who invited members of the American Jewish press for a trip to Israel to cover the recent General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations in Jerusalem but failed to invite the one living person who has attended more GAs than anyone else. Why we were ignored we do not know but obviously it had to be someone on the staff of the Council of Jewish Federations.

Now the Israel Tourist Agency has placed the brochure, "Rediscover Israel", as a full-color insert in every Jewish weekly publication in the U.S. except one - us, most of them with much less circulation than ours. Why we were penalized we do not know but maybe it was because when Vladimir Jabotinsky came to the United States for the first time that the secretary of Theodore Herzl invited us to be a member of the welcoming committee.

We have been Zionist from time one in Louisville where an affiliate of the federation who was writing a column for our Kentucky edition was told that if he didn't stop writing it he would lose his job with us. He was an early Zionist and expressed his views in his column.

So he was being persecuted and now we are being persecuted except for the fact that we learned how to defend ourselves in the same ring in Louisville where Mohammed Ali did his fighting. In fact even before the days of the Golden Gloves tournaments we won the title for our weight in Louisville and then went on to box for the University of North Carolina in the days before college boxing was discontinued as a sport as a boxer at some university was hurt seriously and the sport was discontinued.

So we know how to respond when we learn why a Jewish weekly paper which speaks out editorially as bluntly as do we is being "penalized". We believe a few of our readers recognize that our boxing background often can be detected in the editorials we write, as for instance, this one.

We will get to the bottom of what is taking

place, we assure you — our readers.

More and more readers are joining in to send us clippings from their local Jewish paper of news items of interest to our readers and we are grateful. Especially is this true of obituaries of leading Jewish personalities.

As a result we are able to provide the American Jewish community with news reports that otherwise would not be available.

Also if any readers run across situations that while not having made news for the local daily paper are still of interest to Jewish readers and would alert us, we would follow through to get the details.

We hope we can count on you to join in to help make the P-O do the job it is obligated to do in reporting the news than it otherwise would have not been able to do.

Long ago the P-O decided that in order not to offend its Orthodox and Conservative readers it would refuse to publish advertisements in which a restaurant features lobster and other non-kosher items. The P-O does not, however, go so far as to restrict advertising from restaurants which are not kosher so we are not claiming that therefore we deserve a reward for protecting the sensibilities of our readers who are either Orthodox or Conservative.

So when a certain Jewish weekly that has made significant progress in the last decade or so publishes an advertisement about a certain restaurant's "Lobsterfest" we cringe a bit as obviously must the Orthodox and Conservative readers of that publication.

Years ago we organized the American Jewish Press Association here in Indianapolis and although we never have been a member we believe it well might take a position on certain practices in our field which warrant being observed, as for instance in this one case that rules out plain common respect for the feelings of certain members of the Jewish community.

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5. Don't advertise. Forget that there are new potential customers who would do business with you if they were urged to do so.
6. Don't advertise. Forget that you have competition trying to attract your customers away from you.
7. Don't advertise. Tell yourself it costs too much to advertise and that you don't get enough out of it.
8. Don't advertise. Overlook the fact that advertising is an investment in selling — not an expense.
9. Don't advertise. Be sure not provide an adequate advertising budget for business.
10. Don't advertise. Forget that you have to keep reminding your established customers that you appreciate their business.

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Israel to withdraw from Golan Heights

JERUSALEM — Israel will withdraw from the Golan Heights as also from southern Lebanon and peace will be concluded with Syria, according to aides of Prime Minister-elect Ehud Barak, who is still in the process of forming a new government.

Other news of the new government includes the cancellation of economic subsidies to Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Also accelerated negotiations with the Palestinian Authority.

Meanwhile the president of Lebanon visited a Christian enclave that had been abandoned days earlier by the Israel-allied South Lebanon Army.

Also the head of Israel's domestic service, Ami Ayalon, said that some of the 45 terrorists sought by Israel are serving in the Palestinian police, several of them as officers.

In other Israel news there was speculation that Shimon Peres will become a Cabinet Minister in the new government, while others believe he will become UN ambassador or Israel's next president.

As a sign that he is willing to compromise Barak pledged to curtail Jewish settlement building authorized by the outgoing government. He also told Israel radio that he would establish a committee of Cabinet ministers to review settlement projects approved by Netanyahu's government.

Barak may come to Washington in July but no such meeting has been announced thus far.

Indiana U. program is almost like a yeshiva

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. — If the new program for Jewish studies at Indiana University here is not the same as those at rabbinical colleges then it is at least a close relative. Students will not only study Jewish subjects but they also will live and eat together.

As a result of an \$8 M. grant from the Lilly Foundation, a Jewish Studies Freshman Interest Group (FIG) has been launched.

Students in FIG will live on the same dormitory floor, share a peer advisor, engage in student-initiated Jewish Studies activities (supported by faculty and specially trained residential staff) and take three courses together, English composition, Introduction to Jewish History and a one-credit seminar designed to help them make the academic transition to the university. In addition they will take a course in a Jewish language — modern Hebrew, biblical Hebrew or Yiddish.

Students may complete a major or a certificate in Jewish Studies while taking advantage of regular lunches, dinners and desserts with the faculty; an active Jewish Studies Student Association, an honors program for majors, a three-week summer archaeological field school at Tel Bet Shemesh in Israel, a junior year abroad at Hebrew University in Jerusalem and conference funding for academic and professional conferences.

The program is generously supported with scholarships and internships.

Information is available from the Borns Jewish Studies Program, Goodbody Hall 308, 1011 E. 3rd St., Bloomington, Ind. 47405.

Rabbi heads Greenpeace, and will move to Germany

HAMBURG — Rabbi Walter Homolka, a member of St. John's Wood Liberal Synagogue in London, has become Germany's chairperson of the environmental group, Greenpeace. At age 33 he is an expert in environmental economics and sees his new role as a rabbi and environmentalist as natural.

As he moved into Hamburg's Greenpeace head-

quarters he said "it would be a shame if the piece of good news of a Jew taking on a responsible task that is important to society as a whole pushed the main aim of Greenpeace into the background."

Apart from looking after Greenpeace he will also serve as rabbi for six Liberal congregations, all based in the neighboring state of Lower Saxony.

Romans saw Jews as peskey and odd

MINNEAPOLIS — The Romans considered the Jews as strange creatures and "paradoxical, bizarre and unthinkable" according to Erich Gruen, professor of Classical and Near East studies at the University of California at Berkeley.

Speaking at the University of Minnesota, he said that the Romans did not "have any reason to be alarmed by" the Jews but saw them rather as "perpetrators of alarming practices," the most notable being "taking the Sabbath off, refusing to eat pork and mutilating their genitals."

In the report of the speech in the American Jewish World here Gruen noted that the Romans did not perceive the Jews as a threat. The "ancients worshipped different gods in different numbers" and there is nothing in the literature indicating that "belief in Yahweh posed a threat." He added that "Romans provided them with protections" and even "endorsed their practices."

While the Roman philosopher Seneca "mocks the institution of the Sabbath as a waste of a day, Gruen said "he hardly sounds the alarm to check

ardent missionaries." Also neither were the Jews seen as a financial threat. The Romans "perception was that a typical Jew was taught by his mother to beg."

The Jewish Sabbath was seen as a "monumental folly...a waster of one seventh of life" as "every Sabbath Jews did nothing," and their refusal to fight on the Sabbath led to the loss of Jerusalem.

There was "comparable lampooning of abstinence from eating pork" which they considered was out of reverence or abhorrence of the pig.

Circumcision warranted the view that it was "the most distinctive although not the most visible custom" that drew a lot of laughs.

The rebellion against Rome was regarded with "disbelief and indignation" which "must've given rise to outrage that this puny and insignificant ethnos with bizarre practices would challenge Rome." It was "indignation not just at Jewish chutzpa," but it was seen by the Romans — who had at one time protected them — as "ingratitude."



JUST LIKE AMERICANS — Five Israelis selected to visit American schools included Cincinnati in their visit as they were photographed in the American Israelite which reported that their interests were not that much different from those American Jewish youth — spending their free time at malls, movies and clubs and watching American tv shows like "ER," "Friends," "Dawson's Creek" and "Baywatch." They are from left Anna Dickson, Rachel Schwartzman, Ayelet Israeli, Asaf Bord and Becca Weinstein.

\$5 M. van Gogh to real owner

LONDON — The return of a \$5 M. sketch by Van Gogh by the National Gallery of Berlin to an 85-year-old widow, Gerta Silberberg, who arrived in Britain with her late husband as penniless refugees from Nazi Germany, made news this week. The sketch, L'Olivette, was among 143 artworks that her father-in-law was forced to sell at a series of "Jew auctions" between 1933 and 1938. The return of the work and one other is expected to set a precedent and lead to thousands of artworks

in museums, galleries and private collections throughout the world being restored to their legitimate owners or heirs.

Wolfgang Kahlke, spokesman for the Foundation for Prussian Cultural Heritage, the umbrella organization for German museums, said he hopes the return of the Van Gogh will spark further claims as "memories are jogged."

Hosniya Jabarra has Israel ties

JERUSALEM — The first Arab woman to be elected to the Knesset has a background of activity that involves Israelis. Hosniya Jabarra was the first elected chairwoman of Na'amat in Taiba and was the head of the women's and youth department at the Jewish-Arab club in Beit Berl. She headed the Middle East Department of its International Institute and has been active in Meretz for more than 10 years.

She considers herself "an Israeli Palestinian Arab" and hopes to put her personal ties and "relations of mutual respect" with members of the Palestinian Authority in the service of the new Labor-led government.

Jewish lawyers meet in Germany

BERLIN — Some 150 Jewish lawyers from around the world have joined an equal number of German lawyers as for the first time the International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists are meeting in Germany. Retired Israeli Judge Hadassah Ben-Ito is its president.

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Obituaries

Nathan Ancell succumbs at 90

NEW ROCHELLE, N.Y. — Nathan S. Ancell, co-founder of Ethan Allen, Inc., died at the age of 90. He was an honorary officer of UJA-Federation of New York and formerly served as honorary co-chair of its board of directors. He was

given an honorary doctorate by Brandeis University plus its Distinguished Community Service Award. He was an honorary board member of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

Robert Bergman headed museum

CLEVELAND — Dr. Robert P. Bergman, director of the Cleveland Museum of Art, died at the age of 53 of a rare blood disorder. "Cleveland has lost a great citizen and the museum has lost a great

leader," said Michael Horvitz, president of the museum's board of trustees. Bergman taught at Princeton and Harvard before entering the museum field.

Hyman Faine aided musicians

LOS ANGELES — Prof. Hyman R. Faine who served as president of the Labor Zionist Alliance from 1964 to 1968 died at the age of 88. He was a retired UCLA faculty member and as executive director of the American Guild of Musical Artists he negotiated contracts for artists and staff at the

Metropolitan Opera and the New York City Ballet and other such companies around the U.S.

After his UCLA retirement he set up a program at the University of Judaism to train future administrators for non-profit visual and performing arts institutions.

Robert Goldman, bridge champ

HIGHLAND VILLAGE, Texas — Robert Goldman, who won four world team titles in bridge, died at the age of 60. From 1968 to 1974 he was a member of the Aces team, which dominated the

American tournament scene. He won 13 major national team titles and finished second in three events 12 times. He ranked ninth on the all-time list of master point winners.

Devere Kauffman of West Chester

WEST CHESTER, Pa. — Devere Kauffman, past president of the West Chester United Jewish Appeal and of Keshet Israel Congregation, died at the age of 88. He was a past president of the West

Chester Chamber of Commerce, the United Fund and the Lions Club.

He was honored as "Citizen of the Year" by West Chester.

V. Lowenstein of Flushing, N.Y.

FLUSHING, N.Y. — Victor Lowenstein, past president of

Temple Beth Shalom, is being mourned.

J. I. Sonnenreich, advertising head

LEANDER, Texas — Joseph I. Sonnenreich, a member of the ADL's national commission, and past president of the New York Society for the Deaf, died at the age of 82. He

served as a pilot in World War II. He was active with UJA Federation. Before moving to Texas he was a past president of the League of Advertising Agencies in New York.

Israelis support rights for Arabs

TEL AVIV — A poll conducted for Yediot Achronot, afternoon daily, by the Israel Democracy Institute found that 71 percent believe in equal rights for Jews and Arabs, although 73 percent felt that

fateful decisions — on peace and security — should be left to the Jewish majority.

Eighty-eight percent believe that democracy is the best form of government.

In recognition



Selma Roffman

The retiring principal after 26 years of the Forman Center of the Raymond and Ruth Perelman Jewish Day School of Melrose Park, Pa., Sara Landes, is being succeeded by another Jewish educator, Selma Roffman, a staff member who has several education degrees from Columbia University and the Jewish Theological Seminary and Beaver College.

Mobilian of the Year is Bernard Malkove who was named for that honor by the Civitan Club in Mobile, Ala. after the vote by 89 representatives from civic, professional, trade and charitable organizations.

Rabbi Israel Zoberman was honored as Mayor Meyera E. Oberndorf of Virginia Beach, Va. proclaimed April 23 as Rabbi Israel Zoberman Day and a reception was held in his honor at Beth Chaverim Congregation.

Named Kansas Citian of the year is Jerry Cohen, the highest honor of the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce.

What could be the oldest bat mitzvah ever was that of 88-year-old Sophie Tribuck of Detroit at Temple Israel of Tallahassee.

Steven Grossman, who has been named chairman of the board of trustees of Brandeis University, is the former chairman of the Democratic National Committee.

Rabbi Kerry Baker, former Hillel rabbi at the university in Austin, was formally installed by Congregation Kol Halev of Austin as its founding rabbi on the weekend of May 14-16.

Rabbi Kassel Abelson, emeritus of Brith El Synagogue, was honored for 50 years in the rabbinate at services the weekend of May 7-8.



Rabbi to get hearing; unchains the women

LONDON — The next battle over "chained" Jewish women whose husbands refuse to give them a Jewish divorce despite years of separation, thus preventing them from remarrying, is taking place here as U.S. Rabbi Moshe Morgenstern, a leader in finding fault with the original marriage thus freeing the woman to remarry, will be making a four-day trip here to conduct the second marriage of an agunah, a chained wife who obtained a civil divorce seven years ago.

Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks has agreed to meet with Rabbi Morgenstern although Rabbi Sacks' own beth din has condemned the procedure as illegal.

Rabbi Morgenstern and Rabbi Emanuel Rackman, ex-chancellor of Bar Ilan University, have formed a special religious court to free women trapped in dead marriages whose husbands refuse to grant them a get, a religious bill of divorce.

So far their bet din has freed 270 agunot, although their divorces are not accepted by the Orthodox world.

Rabbi Morgenstern welcomed Rabbi Sacks' decision to meet him. "The Chief Rabbi has backbone — he can stand to hear ideas that are outside the status quo. In America the opposition to me has been fierce. The rabbis there have not even spoken to me, they haven't given me a chance."

Their meeting has also been welcomed by Rosalind Preston, chair of the Chief Rabbi's Women in the Community Review, which five years ago recommended rabbinical action to ease the plight of agunot. "This is enormously interesting," she said. "I look forward to hearing the outcome."

Congregation is told new rabbi is lesbian

WEST HARTFORD, Ct. — As Rabbi Elissa Kohen, who is a lesbian, has been elected as associate rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel here, it made the news in the press but of the 1,500-member congregation it was said that her appointment had been received with mostly positive comment.

"It was important for me to be open with the congregation, but also to stress to them that my agenda is a Jewish agenda", she said.

The reaction has been mostly positive among the congregants, according to Victor Feigenbaum, president, who chaired the search committee, although some members said they were troubled by her appointment.

The New York Times quoted Charles Norwood, a longtime member, as saying that "many of us older people do not like the idea that she's a homosexual," adding that "it doesn't matter to me. I personally feel it's none of my business."

Syrian Jews succorer is compared to Esther

TORONTO — She was compared to Queen Esther as the book, "The Ransomed of God: The Remarkable Story of One Woman's Role in the Rescue of Syrian Jews" about Judy Feld Carr was being lauded. Of the once prominent Jewish community of Syria, Carr estimates, only 48 Jews are still alive, most in Damascus, and they are not bothered by the authorities.

In Toronto she told an audience at Beth Tzedec Synagogue "we were buying Jews, one by one, from a hostile government. It was the best-kept secret in the Jewish world."

Claiming that she facilitated the escape of some 3,000 Jews, she recalled her exploits at a book launching of "The Ransomed of God: The Remarkable Story of One Woman's Role in the Rescue of Syrian Jews." Toronto academic Harold Troper authored it and the publisher was Malcolm Lester Books.

Beth Tzedec Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl compared Carr to Queen Esther.

JDC, ORT join in Kosovo work

NEW YORK — Not waiting for a solution to the situation in Kosovar, the JDC and ORT have launched vocational training and instruction in construction trades to

Kosovo refugees. The \$400,000 funds for the project will come for the \$1.5 M. collected so far from its Kosovo Relief Fund.

'Homicide' series gone, questions remain

By RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

With the departure of NBC's *Homicide* will come a gap in quality TV production — in memorable characters, affecting drama, serious writ-



ing and inspired acting. Fans of the series will feel as though intimate — and sometimes exasperating but always stimulating — friends will stop visiting weekly and become reruns.

Homicide seldom dealt with Jewish themes. It could, I suppose, be argued that with so much murder, the characters would have to be either victims, criminals or cynical cops. The point was made more than once by the series' writers. But not surprisingly — in fact, not a little expectedly, given TV formula and stereotyping, the mouthpiece for cynicism became the Jewish detective, John Munch (Richard Belzer). Sure, there was some lip service paid to the Baltimore Jewish community. But the series always suggested that Munch was as much of an outsider and critic among Jews as among his fellow officers. He was the thinker, the reader, whose erudition could offend almost as much as his sarcasm. He was the anti-reverence.

In a cross-over episode earlier in the season between *Homicide* and *Law and Order*, writers Renee Balcer and David Simon made sure that Munch cited a Morton Epstein of Brown and Epstein for nefarious White House cover-ups. The episode added images of a fellow named Abrams from the special prosecutor's office blackmailing a prosecutor, now appointed judge, in order to hush scandal surrounding a murder. At the end of this much-hyped two-hour, one-hour-a-day fare, it is Munch who is chosen to offer a mocking salute of the flag in an obvious parody on White House (or at least Federal) spindoctoring.

I suppose that one could argue that the show is "bal-

anced" in that its Jewish characters are both the partners in corruption and the critics and mockers of such corruption. But it did remain troubling to the end that Jews were limited to these roles and to no others — except as cantankerous coroners and silent corpses.

Sure, Munch was basically a nice guy, and he was also entrepreneurial. He and an African-American detective ran a bar frequented by their fellow officers, while off-duty, of course. And in that bar Munch hired and then proposed to a waitress who was to become his fourth wife, after having had three divorces

archy that has been virtually unassailable for 2,000 years." But writer Fontana made sure that the Church maintained its dignity in the final episode. A young Catholic nun touched the audience with her forgiveness and comforting of her sister's killer.

In the same hour, Munch is appointed father-confessor by another detective who is determined to break the law and to take human life while taking the law into his own hands. Though not quite aware of the other detective's intentions, Munch indicates agreement in principle with the steps that his colleague is

vorite buffoon?

In 1982, producer Barry Levinson ended his movie, *Diner*, with a Jewish wedding that was symbolic of hope, morality, and spiritual continuity. In 1999, he had the one Jewish character in his artistic TV series married in a church by a priest. Could it be that Munch represents a world in such disarray that just taking any shot at happiness, regardless of religious or even compatibility considerations, is clasped and grabbed? Who does Munch really represent? American Jews? The human situation?

None — or all — of the above?

It is interesting that Levinson does not allow Munch to consummate his marriage. The series swan song is therefore without consummation, too. Could Munch represent the negation of all clasped happiness and the need for enduring values and meaning? Was the church wedding a revisitation, in code, of the Jewish wedding of the 1980's? And if so, why did it have to be in code? Why did the series ditch the chuppah and the synagogue and the steadfastness of its only lead Jewish character?

Homicide seldom dealt with Jewish themes. It could, I suppose, be argued that with so much murder, the characters would have to be either victims, criminals or cynical cops. The point was made more than once by the series' writers. But not surprisingly — in fact, not a little expectedly, given TV formula and stereotyping, the mouthpiece for cynicism became the Jewish detective, John Munch (Richard Belzer). Sure, there was some lip service paid to the Baltimore Jewish community. But the series always suggested that Munch was as much of an outsider and critic among Jews as among his fellow officers. He was the thinker, the reader, whose erudition could offend almost as much as his sarcasm. He was the anti-reverence.

of her own. Writer Tom Fontana saw no contradiction between his one-liners about all the divorces and having the happy couple wed in the Catholic Church. The marriage took place, we were told, only after the Church made Munch sign a document in which he agrees to raise any future children as Catholic.

Not unexpectedly (again), Munch makes cracks about the Church, asserting that one should probably not bother fighting the Vatican, "a patri-

about to take, and the implication is that Munch was quite capable of playing the executioner himself.

Is it my imagination, or did *Homicide* end with old images of the unbelieving, cynical Jew defending vengeance and therefore "counterbalancing" the depiction of the Catholic nun? Are the images any less problematic because the writer seems to admire Munch's iconoclasm? Is what is said (and shown) less important than the wink at a fa-

Pulpit changes

Rabbi Howard H. Ruben has been installed as assistant rabbi at Anche Chesed-Fairmount Tmepole, Cleveland...Rabbi Samuel M. Cohon has been named senior rabbi of Temple Emanu-El, Tucson...Rabbi David Lornberg has joined the staff of Congregation Beth Am, San Diego...The new spiritual leader of Ner Tamid Congregation, Rancho Bernardi, Calif., is Rabbi Arnold Kopikis...Rabbi Valerie Cohen is the new assistant rabbi of Temple Israel, Memphis...Temple Oheb Shalom, Baltimore, has welcomed Rabbi Steven Fink to its pulpit...Rabbi Stanton Zemek is the new spiritual leader of Beth Shalom Congregation, Baton Rouge, La...Congregation Beth Am, Tampa, has elected Rabbi Brian Zimmerman as its spiritual leader...Rabbi Barbara Metzinger is the new associate rabbi of Temple Emanuel of South Hills, Pittsburgh.

Quotation of the week

On May 22, Judy and I attended the Shabbat morning service at Congregation Beth Israel Sinai in Racine, Wisconsin. The service was a most satisfying worship experience. We were a group of perhaps three dozen worshippers, in a small (and unaffiliated) Conservative Synagogue.

The synagogue was simple and unpretentious; the rabbi, Rabbi Ze'ev Harari, warmly welcomed us, and made us feel very much at home throughout the entire service and the Kiddush that followed. My son, Aaron, and Rabbi Harari's wife, Laura, sang much of the music for the service, accompanying themselves and the congregation on guitar. I had the honor of introducing the Torah reading with a Devar Torah and chanting the Haftarah reading.

The highlight of the Shabbat morning service was a ceremony marking the completion of the conversion to Judaism of Aaron's girlfriend, Jennifer. Jennifer had been studying Judaism with Rabbi Harari and other rabbis in the Milwaukee area for nearly a year, and had completed the mikveh and beit din portions of the conversion a week before; now, on a bright and sunny Shabbat morning, she held the Torah scroll, recited the Shema, read a declaration of faith, and read and sang several moving poems and songs.

Rabbi Harari invited me to take part in the conversion ceremony by reciting the Priestly Benediction and sharing with Jennifer a mazel tov from both our family and Temple Beth-El.

We often hear the expression "Jews by Choice" used to refer to those who have converted to Judaism, in place of the earlier term "converts." We say that a Jew is either a Jew by birth or Jew by choice, one is either born into the faith or chooses to become Jewish. Yet in reality, we can define a Jew by birth as a Jew by choice if that person chooses to live a Jewish life. Juda-

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5 years—no bad days, no plans to retire

By JACOB NEUSNER

Every five years or so, my college class publishes a book of reports of the members on what they have been doing. In the allotted 500 words or so, I have used the occasion to answer the question people frequently ask — mostly as a matter of courtesy — along the lines of, "what are you working on these days?"

Here is my reply for 1994-1999.

In the past five years I have turned to systematic theology of classical Judaism, that is, to reading a religion philosophically. I address questions of theological structure and system to the writings of Rabbinic Judaism in its formative age, the first six centuries C.E. [A.D.]. Having spent 20 years, 1972-1992, analyzing the distinctive traits — rhetorical, logical, and topical — of the various documents, about five years ago I took up the logical next question: how do these diverse documents form a common, coherent statement? What do they say when we take up their contents, viewed whole?

Any religion carries us from analysis of the parts to synthesis of the whole. So I seek the coherent set of ideas that animate all the writings and transcend the boundaries of the documentary components of the canon.

To begin with I started down the wrong road: find the final, definitive statement and work back from there. I chose what I thought was the one document, the Talmud of Babylonia, ca. 600 C.E., that formed out of all the prior writings the final and comprehensive formulation. But that produced precisely the results I had been finding — the description of a document and its system in particular — and not what I was seeking, what transcends documentary lines.

So then I turned to analyze different phenomena altogether from the literary ones. I chose the problem of language: theology is to religion as language is to experience. I asked, Does a single structure of language animate the whole, so that if I can describe how that language works, I can identify the main beams of structure and order of the whole? In my three-volume Theological Grammar of the Oral Torah (Vocabulary,

Grammar, Syntax) I spread out the results.

Then I took the next step, one outside of the entire body of writing: can I, on my own, identify an integrating problematic, compose a theory of the system viewed whole, and find out whether, in fact, that theory matches the evidence? I chose the obvious: monotheism and its problem of God's justice. This yielded The Theology of the Oral Torah: Revealing the Justice of God and The Theology of the Halakhah, the one on the writings of a narrative, exegetical, and theological character — norms of belief (aggadah) — and the other on writings of a legal character (halakhah) — norms of behavior. This division between the two types of norms in writing matches the native categories of ancient classical Judaism: law vs. exegesis and narrative.

That work has just reached its conclusion in the two Theologies, and directs me toward the logically necessary next question. That concerns how these two native categories — so carefully differentiated from one another — work together to make a coherent statement. About that I shall report in 2004.

Teaching and research at the University of South Florida produce only good days, never bad ones. In the dreary decades (1968-1990) at Brown University, a "name university" of dubious quality and no curriculum, I did not know that out here in the "no-name universities" work thoroughly professional teachers and accomplished scholars, who live out their years without taking pride in where they work, only in what they achieve.

I told the story of the dismantling of Brown in The Price of Excellence. Universities in Conflict during the Cold War Era (Continuum), which I wrote with my No. 3 son, Noam M. M. Neusner. Here at USF we hew the wood and draw the water of higher education: the full-service university on the urban frontier. We and our counterparts in every city in the country give this country its future.

If I enjoy continuing robust health as at present, I shall not retire — in Florida no one has to — but shall die engaged

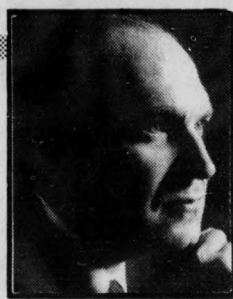
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As I Heard It

In praise of (some) fathers

By MORTON GOLD

I am really reluctant to ruffle anyone's feathers today so I shall neither review a CD, concert nor any new music! Since the American holiday



called "Father's Day" is fast approaching, that will be the subject for today's column.

If I recall my biblical history, our three first kings did not have much *mazel* in the fatherhood department. King Saul hoped that his son would want to follow him in the family business but Jonathan preferred to be David's buddy. David composed 150 beautiful psalms and played the lyre but marital bliss and *nachas* from his children was not in his portion. His wife Mical was by all accounts an uppity soul who didn't appreciate David's dancing in front of the ark and his sons couldn't wait for him to expire to proclaim themselves king. While the prophet Samuel didn't exactly approve of his initial association with Bathsheba, it was he who encouraged David to name their son Solomon as his heir.

Now Solomon was a great king to be sure, asking G-d for wisdom. He may have been a bit too smart however. What man can keep over a hundred wives happy? You'd need to be made of... well, never mind. Anyway his children caused the division of Israel leading to the disappearance of ten of our tribes! Being a king in Israel may have been a prestigious job, and it did have its perks, but domestic tranquility, a good home life and adoring children were not part of the equation.

As for our patriarchs, we all know the *tsoris* their children gave them. Who is happy? According to Pirke Avot, "he who is happy with his portion." While having children is not a problem (for most) men, raising them usually is. Men are supposed to be the bread winner (as many of our wives are), are supposed to be handy around the

house, supposed to take out the garbage, be skilled at surfing the TV channels, adept at reading bedtime stories, attend PTA meetings, sporting events and so on.

Our kings of old never had to do any of these things, which may be the reason they did not do too well in the fatherhood department. Fathers are also supposed to transmit our collective religious as well as cultural heritage to their children. That is one tall order. Perhaps that is the reason why a child's name is so and so, the son or daughter of the DADDY. I am acutely aware of the reasons for deciding the religious descent from the mother. There are many good and valid reasons for this, particularly during our tumultuous history over the last thousand years. One could not always be certain of who the father was, but one always knew (almost always) who the mother was. It was the mother who nursed the child and who cared for it.

In the world we live in today, DNA can readily identify the daddy beyond any doubt and daddies all too frequently do the 2 a.m. feeding, and most share in the upbringing of their offspring. While Orthodox Jews are still cool to the idea, in point of fact, our children can be and frequently are raised by the father as well as the mother.

In a situation where only one of the parents is "religious" or "observant" (if you prefer) the transmission of religious values is in peril. Laying the praise or blame on the mother alone is as unfair as it is unreasonable. Both parents need to be involved. I sometimes wonder if a distinguished Orthodox rabbi had put forth the idea of patrilineal descent, particularly during the Shoah, what the reaction might have been. I concede that initially I fell into the trap of seeing base motives in the idea in the first place and was suspicious of patrilineal descent since it came from Reform Judaism. Well friends, I have done some real soul searching. The use of the organ, mixed choir, mixed seating, and the use of the vernacular in the service all originated in Reform Judaism. All of the above are today mostly

accepted in Conservative congregations as well. To my way of thinking these are all positive and beneficial developments.

Therefore, if a male Jew wants to rear his child in the faith of his (and our) fathers, who is to say that he cannot? To say that the child needs to be converted first (assuming his mother is not Jewish) when he has been brought up as a Jew, attends Hebrew school, services, etc. seems to be as necessary as having a spare tire on a motor boat.

Some time ago, a letter writer chided me for "keeping silent" about my own children. For anyone who wants or needs to know, I am more than proud of all of my children. All have earned college degrees: one is a computer programmer, the second a lawyer and the third a dental hygienist. While I would like to take credit for their achievements (and I have surely done my part) these offspring also have a mother who must be reckoned just as responsible for their success.

Nobody is ever really prepared to be a father; there are no courses to prepare one adequately. It is a title one has to earn by on-the-job training. One child does not prepare you for the next. While each orchestra has similar instruments, each is entirely different. As already mentioned our patriarchs, our first kings, all were deficient in the fatherhood ratings. Even our great teacher Moses had children who did not rate mention after he died. His brother Aaron had two of his dispatched by G-d.

So, if your own dad does not (did not) measure up, give the guy a break and help him out. After all if our patriarchs, etc., had problems with their kids, one should be forgiving. So let's hear it for our own dads. This is His day. If we can pay tribute to our moms, we owe as much to our dads. After all, where would we be if not for him?

(I promise to write about musicals matters next time out. Thank you. MG.)

(Dr. Gold may be reached at: 12 Avenue B, Rutland, VT 05701-4503 or by e mail at: DrMGGold@juno.com)

Milk, Honey & Vinegar

Minor matters, Mr. Barak

By JUDY CARR

Well, there is a new prime minister, all speeches, smiles and promises. As a friend of mine said, also a pensioner not growing any younger, "They all promise. Let's wait and see."

The settlement with the Palestinians, Jerusalem, Lebanon, those are the big questions. I do not have to worry about all that. Barak will take it off my hands.

But will Barak deal with the problems that do concern the pensioners in Yad Eliahu? Such as nit-picking, silly decisions of social workers and bureaucrats that make our lives a misery.

Pensioners in a nearby residence face pension day in a state of mounting shock. It is the day they pay the local grocer's monthly bill, which is rising all too rapidly as food prices rise. These pensioners could have meals from the municipality at a small rate, but the decision has been made by the powers above that the meals cannot be delivered to them. The oldsters must collect them from a nearby institution.

These seniors with their bad feet, bad hands and wheezing lungs cannot go even a short distance, much less carry the meals home. So they have to pay the huge bills.

Well, Prime Minister, do you regard this as your business?

Another pensioner had to have two serious operations which involved travel to a hospital in another town, endless bus rides to clinics and places for tests. This cost him no end for bus rides and taxi fares.

"Look, I'm not made of money," he told his Sick Fund doctor.

After one more minor operation, he was told to go home by the doctor, with no transport and no one to accompany him.

"I felt like a stray dog," he told me.

Luckily he was able to get hold of a kind-hearted religious girl who dropped everything to come and fetch him.

Minor matters of course. Nothing for a Prime Minister to deal with. But who does deal with these matters? They are not minor when they are happening to you.

Such matters as raises in pensions, help with the rent, home care, these we have and are extremely grateful for. These the ministers see to.

Perhaps these are not things for the Prime Minister's agenda.

However, could the order please come from above? From the top man, from the "Buck Stops Here" man.

Stop making people's lives a misery when there is no reason for it. Let sensible officials make more sensible decisions.

So they can't take the meals around to the residence just

across the road? Why not? A volunteer could do it.

Who is bothered? Why should they be bothered?

Sufficient food, the right diet for a pensioner, it could be the difference between life and death for an old person, just as the Prime Minister's decision will make a difference to the life or death of a young soldier.

Think about it, Prime Minister.

Judy Carr may be reached at POB 6431, Tel Aviv, mx 61 063 Israel

About Books

By JACK FISCHEL

The University of Nebraska continues to publish important books dealing with the Jewish experience. Its latest publication is *Between Re-*



demption and Doom: The Strains of German-Jewish Modernism by Noah Isenberg. The author traces the involvement of Jewish personalities in German modernism through the contributions made by Franz Kafka, Arnold Zweig, Paul Wegner (who produced the film version of the Golem myth) and Walter Benjamin. (This month, \$40).

I've just finished reading *The Language of Silence: West German Literature and the Holocaust* by Ernestine Schlant. The author, the wife of presidential aspirant Bill Bradley, has written an important book on an area of German-Jewish relations that for the most part remained unexplored until the publication of her book.

From my reading of this erudite book, my guess is that should Bill Bradley be elected president, we will have one of the most remarkable first la-

dies to ever occupy the White House. The book is in paper and is indispensable for anyone interested in the reactions of German intellectuals after the Holocaust. Routledge (\$20.99 paper, this month).

The definitive history of the Hebrew narrative from Biblical times to contemporary Israel is the subject of *The Hebrew Folktale: History, Genre, Meaning* by Eli Yassif, translated from Hebrew by Jacqueline Teitelbaum, with a Foreword by David ben-Amos. The author is professor of Hebrew literature and Jewish folklore at Tel Aviv University. Indiana University Press (Nov., \$59.95).

The Russian-Jewish avant-garde artist Lazar Markovich Lissitzky is the subject of a biography. *El Lissitzky: Beyond the Abstract Cabinet* by Margarita Tupitsyn will be published by Yale University Press in November \$65).

A typical memoir by an award-winning poet's life in exile, first as a Jew in Chile, then as an immigrant in America is told in *The Alphabet in My Hands: A Writing Life*, by Marjorie Agosin. Rutgers University Press (Jan., \$24). Rutgers University Press will also publish *Jewish and Islamic Philosophy: Crosspollinations in the Classic Age* by Lenn Goodman (Sept., \$55). The author teaches philosophy at Vanderbilt University.

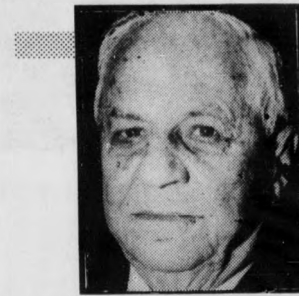
Fleishman's Flight

Israel gains new status

By ALFRED FLEISHMAN

The results of the election are well known to everyone by this time.

But I believe there was something else that took



place. I want to talk about the unusual amount of space that was given to the election everywhere and its results.

In many papers in the United States an unusual amount of space was given. Particularly was this true of the election itself and the results. I have not seen all the papers, but from the *New York Times* and the others throughout the nation the results were, it seems to me, as never before.

In many newspapers throughout the nation, in addition to the front page stories, there was much more inside. I sincerely believe that this had an additional meaning. I have tried to interpret that meaning and I believe that it means that Israel has arrived over and above its usual status!

Israel is regarded no longer as a little zone somewhere among the Arab states. It is one of the states that the world is now giving its fuller attention.

It means that no longer will Jews be known as a wandering people with no place anywhere in the world. They can be called a nation in its full meaning.

There is a Jewish State, and the world is paying serious attention to its people and their leadership.

This is very important. And it puts an added responsibility upon those who serve it. It means that the state, starting with members of the Knesset, will be watched and judged. It means that Israel is highly considered by all the world as a serious state... and now should receive the same amount of consideration from its leaders and its people. They must act accordingly.

I believe we have passed through the period of when we were sort of super worried about what was called anti-Semitism.

Then there came the Holocaust period which we are now leaving to some extent. We will not forget that period; we never will. But we are now regarded as an important people among the nations of the world and we must accept that as very responsible.

When that sinks in, everyone will be affected by our leadership. We will no longer be ruled by the religious alone, but by the principles which make us a great nation in which all Jews will be proud, and of which all people will take notice. Israel is a Jewish State and hopefully will recognize its responsibility and its position.

It is now going to affect all Jews everywhere and must be so regarded. Young people will hold their heads up high. The respect we will receive will depend in large measure upon the state itself.

We will have more to say about this and will do so in future columns.

Southern Diary could be better

NEW YORK — A diary maintained by Helen Jacobus Apte from her marriage in 1909 until shortly before her death "that furnishes an insightful record of Southern Jewish bourgeoisie life in the first half of the 20th century" received a wishy washy review in the *New York Times*

Book Review Sunday.

Reviewer Margalit Fox wrote that "the reader's only regret on finishing this lovely volume is that Helen Apte lacked the self-assurance, and the encouragement of her times, to write a real memoir, filling in the echoing spaces left hauntingly empty here."

When parents won't cry

There was a terrible accident as a truck collided with an Amtrak train. Among a number of fatalities were two children who lived in our vicinity. Their parents appeared on national and local television expressing great faith and in a certain sense, joy. Their children were now with G-d. Reactions to their lack of grief and almost ebullient behavior were mixed. The media enthusiastically applauded this "demonstration of true faith" while others were shocked. "Not a tear," they protested.

By **RABBI
RAFAEL G.
GROSSMAN**

A reporter called to get my reaction. "Were you not inspired by their faith?" "Frankly, no," I told him. "In fact, I was greatly dismayed and terribly frightened and for the first time, my frustration as a result of a terrible philosophic dilemma ended. I now understood why so many in our western world remained silent when one and a half million Jewish children were murdered. If death can bring joy in the guise of faith, humankind is in grave danger. When parents fail to cry, shout and scream, at the worst of all tragedies, the loss of a child or children, while the media applauds this pathetic behavior, hope is lost, and tragedies will multiply.

"After hearing about the collision, I expected angry protests against railroads and city planners whose rail crossings through cities, towns and roads everywhere have long been a source of accidents. And when children die of dreadful disease, I am anguished by the lack of resolve to find cures or better treatment. Loud grief is, in itself, a voice of protest."

Grieving is also an essential component of healthy behavior. Our sages warned against excessive grief, but at the very same time, require us to mourn, and *Hashem*, we are taught, cries with us. Grief is also a powerful statement as it expresses respect for life.

The death of a child epitomizes tragedy and should evoke maximum grief, and parents should be urged to indulge in what Freud called, "the work of mourning." *Halacha* stages this work — *shiva*, *shloshim* and for the loss of parents, 12 months, going from intense bereavement to an eventual return to normalcy.

G-d help children whose parents do not exhibit feelings of pain at the loss of a loved one in their presence. I practice grief therapy, but with time constraints, I am limited to special referrals. A psychiatrist I know well referred a mother, father and an 11-year-old child. They were devout Christians. In fact, he was a prominent pastor at a nearby church. The child appeared to be severely depressed and would hardly speak. Her becoming depressed was sudden and began some 18 months earlier.

At first, I failed to understand my benefit to this family. They were already seeing a competent professional. "Why," I asked the parents, "was she referred to me," in a matter I thought unrelated to grief? "Was there a death in your family at the time her behavior changed?"

"Come to think of it," the wife said, "my mother died

shortly before her depression began."

"Did you love your mother?"

"Of course, I loved her very much." I could see the child contort. Her color changed; her eyes constricted, and then at once she shouted, "You're lying, you didn't love her! You didn't even cry when Grandma died!"

The child's mother began to tell how she concealed her grief to protect her daughter. The young daughter could not help but cry at the loss of her grandmother. She knew her tears expressed love; therefore, her mother's lack of tears could only mean that she didn't love her own mother. The child concluded, if mom didn't love her mom, then she doesn't love me. The result — psychological trauma and compounded agony.

Knowing that parents can love and feel pain at the loss of a loved one only confirms to children, parental ability to love. Tears of bereavement, short of becoming pathological, make believers out of children. They learn to accept expressions of love as truths.

In Judaism, death is not a part of life. It is the violation of *Hashem's* creation — unwanted — designed as a challenge to man to fathom its mystery and to destroy the angel of death. But why, some argue, should we be made to fear death? Dr. Kevorkian may well succeed in his battle for approval of assisted suicide only because we are being made to acquiesce to death and accept it as an integral part of being.

Several weeks ago, an op.ed. piece appeared in *The New York Times*. The writer discussed the future prolongation of life to the age of 150. "But is this good?" he questioned. "How will we feed, employ and engage a vastly overpopulated world?" He suggested diverting money from medical research committed to extending life. Funds should be used, he argued, to feed the starving in Africa and other impoverished parts of the world.

This is warped thought, and we have been plagued with this kind of thinking for far too many years. Prolonging life and protecting it is *Hashem's* mandate to all of us. There is a huge chasm between Torah thought and other religious views. Judaism views death as an abomination, unwelcome and detested. Other religions see salvation as man's purpose, attainable in death alone. Torah mandates choosing life, "*not the dead shall praise G-d.*" And the preservation of life supersedes all sacred commandments.

Continued on next page

Digest of the Yiddish Press

Lubavitch show creativity

By RABBI SAMUEL SILVER

The ingenuity of the Lubavitch movement is endless. Ever hear of a Jewish fundraising event in a museum?



Well, last Lag B'omer 500 people, including many wealthy families, attended such an event in the theater of the Guggenheim Museum, on Manhattan's Fifth Avenue. Purpose of the gathering was financial support for a mikvah in the Schneerson Center on the city's East Side.

The idea was that of a Lubavitch activist, Rabbi Ben Zion Krasniansky, who learned that if you become a member of the museum you can sponsor a program there. The program included talks by the rabbi, a number of donors, and a concert by a popular Yiddish singer and humorist, Abraham Freed, who had the people applauding his talent and his wit.

The editor of the *Algemeiner Journal*, Gershon Jacobson, himself a Lubavitcher, reports the event with much delight. To him, however, the high point of the evening was a talk, which he calls historic, by an eloquent woman, Judith Segal, the chairwoman of the mikvah project. He writes that she mesmerized the audience by indicating the value of a mikvah and telling of the need of one for those who, like herself, live on the East Side of Manhattan and must fight their way to the West Side where a mikvah is located.

On hand for the gathering were not only donors, but a cluster of Orthodox rabbis who marveled at the resourcefulness of Rabbi Krasniansky.

Antwerp's Jews

The city of Antwerp, Belgium, has from 20,000 to 25,000 Jews, and most of them are flourishing economically. That news was given to readers of the *Algemeiner Journal* by

Naftali Kraus, who covers Israel for the newspaper. His visit occurred during and shortly after Passover. Since he is Orthodox he spent time with traditionalist Jews who refused to tell him whether there are any liberal Jews in the city.

He writes that several large synagogues are almost empty because the Antwerp Jews prefer to meet in small groups. The chief rabbi of Antwerp is Chaim Krizwirth, who is pictured in the spread in a "Jewish street."

One of the Antwerp rabbis, Jeremiah Cohen, has received an invitation to go to Budapest, Hungary, and occupy a pulpit which will shortly be vacated by the current occupant, Rabbi Aaron Hoffman, who is ailing, and wants to retire. He says that an Orthodox religious school in Antwerp, Yavneh, is so strict that they refused to admit a youngster because they found out that her mother wears pants.

It reminded him of an Israeli school which has a quota on Sephardic Jews. In Antwerp Kraus recognized quite a number of Israelis who were touring in the Belgian city.

Voters compared

The United States is a democracy, but, ironically, its citizens do not fully exercise their privilege of voting. Even in national elections more people eligible to vote do not do so than those who do. In contrast, in the recent election in Israel the total of citizens who cast a ballot was 79 percent! (*The Forward*).

Economist writes

Two things recently happened with Prof. Arthur Lerner: he turned 91, and he turned out a book of essays and memoirs. The title of the work: *Un Doch*, that is, *And yet*.

An economist, a one-time professor, at Concordia University in Montreal, Lerner is a leader of the Yiddish Cultural Congress, a stalwart Bundist, and one of the leading lights of YIVO, the Yiddish Scientific Institute. Out of Poland, he immigrated to

Reviewed by SYBIL KAPLAN

"The Story of the Jews: A 4,000-Year Adventure" by Stan Mack, Villard, \$14.95 paperback, 288 pp.

When this book came out last year in hardbound, it was reminiscent of a genre of recent cartoons, the 1980s Art Spiegelman book, "Maus, A Survivor's Tale," in particular. "The Jew of New York," by The Forward's columnist also came out recently in a book.

Now Stan Mack, an artist who created a weekly cartoon column, who has co-authored or illustrated a number of children's books, who was art director of the New York Times Sunday Magazine, has created a history of the Jews through cartoons.

It all began 4,000 years ago with Abraham and goes forward past the Romans and the

Toronto and then to Montreal, and now spends time in Florida.

His book pays tribute to fellow-Yiddishists and social democrats, and conveys his love of *mame lashon*. It runs 422 pages and is put out by the Peretz Foundation in Tel Aviv. In the *Forward* I Osterman pronounced the work as "geshmahk" (delicious).

2 are mourned

The *Forward* observed a sad anniversary: the first yahrzeit of its editor, Mordecai Strigler. Concurrently it reported the death of Geoffrey Wigoder, the American who became an Israeli reporter and encyclopedist. There is a grim coincidence in the two notices. Both Strigler and Wigoder died as a result of accidental falls.

He's consistent

In the *Algemeiner Journal*, Cantor Moshe Teleshevsky retells an old story. It's about the wealthy man who refused to give a rabbi a contribution for the fund to assist the poor. He told the rabbi that he has a very poor brother. The poor brother once came to the rabbi asking for a handout. Irritated, the rabbi went to the wealthy man and reminded him of his excuse for not giving to the fund. He said to him, "That poor brother of yours came to me for some financial help."

Replied the stingy one, Continued on page 14

Our 4,000-year adventure

Talmud, through Zion of the 1900s and concludes in modern-day Israel and the U.S.

Here is a lively and entertaining, informative and practical book for all who want a brush-up course on Jewish

history. The work is interesting and the style is attractive and absorbing. This would make a good bar or bat mitzvah gift or gift to a family's library.

Quotation

Continued from page 5

ism, and especially Reform Judaism, espouses the concept of freedom of choice; each of us chooses to what extent we will live identifiably Jewish lives.

There are many ways in which the element of choice contributes to our Jewish living. We choose whether to affiliate with a congregation, and which kind, and for how long. We choose which, if any, Jewish organizations in the community to support, and to what extent. We choose the extent, if any, to which we will engage in Jewish study, and make our Jewish learning and growth a life-long pursuit. And we choose whether we will take the time and make the effort to transmit our Jewish culture, values, texts, languages, history, and sacred missions to our children.

Every Jew is a Jew by choice, a choosing Jew. Some Jews choose to immerse themselves in Jewish living, each day of their lives; others choose to ignore, or deny their Jewish heritage. Most of us are between these two extremes. We are proud of Jennifer for choosing to be a Jew, for choosing, voluntarily, to become an active part of the Jewish people, and we are reminded by her act of faith that each of us can choose to be more committed, better educated, and more active Jews in our community and throughout our own lives.—Rabbi Michael N. Stevens, Temple Beth-El, Hammond, IN.

Parents

Continued from prev. page

G-d help all of us if we need to conceal a justifiably broken heart at the greatest of pains and the worst of tragedies, the loss of an innocent... a child, heaven forbid, your own. I cry for the children who perished

when their train collided. I cry for their parents who were dehumanized in faith's name. The voice of your children cries out from the ground.

(Reprinted from *The Jewish Press*.)

Misconceptions

Car purchase merits blessing

By RABBI REUVEN BULKA

Misconception: Buying a car is a purely business matter, with no religious implications.

Whenever one purchases something significant, new



clothing, or other items the individual is excited about, one recites the blessing of

sheheheyanu. (Who has kept us alive and maintained us, enabling us to reach this moment).

Therefore, when one purchases a car, and one may assume that the purchase of a car is a significant event that makes the individual happy, one should recite the *sheheheyanu* blessing. We link the joy of acquisition with gratitude to God.

If the car will be used by many drivers, including the children, then a different blessing is recited, that is, *hatov v'ha-maytiv* (Who is good and does good for others).

Israel: As I See It

Bar Ilan U. celebrates progress

By SAMSON KRUPNICK

The 44th annual Conference of the International Board of Directors of Bar Ilan University featured the advancement of the university in



many areas of scholastic and research activities.

An inspired President Moshe Kaveh outlined the greater participation of Bar Ilan University "in meeting the challenges of Jewish identity in the modern State of Israel and in the broader Jewish world beyond." Planned are the formation of a high-tech engineering school as part of a major program of constructing a new northern campus involving a mammoth \$500 million capital campaign, the largest ever in Israel.

Included in the vast outreach program are the International Center for Jewish Identity and the Virtual University on the Internet. Noteworthy are the activities in the Medrashia with over 1,200 women and the 450 men in the Kollel to produce qualified teachers for Israel and abroad.

At the three-day conference reports were given by the various department heads and administrative leadership including detailed accounts by Chancellor Emanuel Rackman, active as ever in promoting Bar Ilan University in Israel as well as in the United States: reports by Dr. Zorach Warhaftig, chairman of the Executive Council; messages by the rector, Prof. Yehuda Friedlander, of educational progress in the university and in its five colleges throughout Israel with over 26,000 students; financial and administrative accounts by Director General Shabtai Lubel of the huge budget of the university reaching the \$150 million mark and an evaluation of the university assets in excess of some \$250 million; and a summation by outgoing chairman of the international Board of Governors, Selik Wengrowsky, of the noteworthy attainments of

Bar Ilan University in virtually all spheres of activity.

In addition to the business sessions dealing with the operations of so large a university including resolutions and elections, there were a number of very impressive dinners, dedications, and social functions for members of the board and their spouses.

Of great significance was the festive opening dinner at the Jerusalem Hilton together with the Ingeborg Rennert Center for Jerusalem Studies honoring Abraham Michael Rosenthal, former editor in chief of the New York Times,

Tannoudji (France), Mrs. Rachel Dahan (U.S.A.), Jack Gradel (U.K.), Dr. Moris L. Green (U.S.A.)-Maj. Gen. (res.) David Ivri (Israel), Dr. Mordecai D. Katz (U.S.A.), Pastor Friedrich Wilhelm Fritz May (Germany) and Irving Schneider (U.S.A.) A sumptuous dinner followed the ceremony.

Delegates and friends were treated to a gala evening at the Mann Auditorium in Tel Aviv of Oriental and Israeli music under the auspices of the Aharon and Rachel Dahan Center for Sephardic Heritage in cooperation with the Mo-

years" with the help of the Almighty and its many friends.

(Samson Krupnick may be

reached at 22 Pinsker, Jerusalem 92228, Israel)e-mail krupnick@netvision.net.il)

Neusner

Continued from page 6
with teaching and analyzing some puzzle of inquiry that at that moment I am trying to work out. I can imagine no

other way of life, nor have I ever wanted to do anything with my life but what I am doing now. So why quit?

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SMALL SOUTH TEXAS "CONSERVATIVE" CONGREGATION NEEDS A RABBI.

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Executive Director for small United Way funded agency serving youth and their families. Must hold Masters in Social Work or related field, or business and should have at least five years post graduate experience in a human service organization. Responsible for all areas of programs delivery, and all administrative functions of the agency. Knowledge of and commitment to the ideals and goals of a Jewish human service organization are essential. Send resume by June 30th with salary requirement request to Search Committee, c/o Big Brothers/Big Sisters Association, 1580 Summit Rd., Cincinnati, Ohio 45237 or Fax 513-761-3202

Executive Director

Central Kentucky Jewish Federation of Lexington, Kentucky is seeking an Executive Director to assume responsibility of providing overall guidance, leadership and direction to volunteers and staff in communal decision making and effective use of resources:

The Executive Director will have ongoing responsibility for:

- administration and budgeting
- campaign planning
- financial resource development
- communal planning, including Social Services
- management of committee activities
- human resource development
- community relations

Send resume by June 30, 1999 to:

Central Kentucky Jewish Federation, Attention: Search Committee, 340 Romany Road, Lexington, KY 40502

Of great significance was the festive opening dinner at the Jerusalem Hilton together with the Ingeborg Rennert Center for Jerusalem Studies honoring Abraham Michael Rosenthal, former editor in chief of the New York Times, with the Guardian of Zion award. In his lecture on the Middle East he urged unity in Israel and full support by the Jewish community abroad. "We have many enemies, and some friends who are not helpful, hence we must stay together," he advised. Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert and Minister for Foreign Affairs Arik Sharon, friends of the award recipient, congratulated Rosenthal.

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"We have many enemies, and some friends who are not helpful, hence we must stay together," he advised. Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert and Minister for Foreign Affairs Arik Sharon, friends of the award recipient, congratulated Rosenthal.

Most impressive was the awarding on campus of honorary doctorates to deserving and outstanding personalities both in Israel and abroad. The recipients were Mrs. Dina Berniker (Israel), Haifa Chief Rabbi Shear Yashuv Cohen (Israel), Prof. Claude Cohen

roccan Immigrant Society and the Israeli Sephardic Federation.

Minister of Finance Meir Sheetrit, Tel Aviv Mayor Mr. Ran Huldai and Professor Moshe Kaveh emphasized the importance of the encouragement of the Sephardic traditions, customs and most particularly their musical talents.

As a board member for some 20 years serving in varied capacities including a stint as chairman of fund raising and development, we found this conference truly heart warming to witness the tremendous progress of the University in realizing the goal of President Kaveh to make Bar Ilan "the biggest and best University in Israel within a few



Social Calendar

By Jean Herschaft

Jack and I reached that hallowed plateau of grandparents for the second time. The date was May 19. The time was 10:30 a.m. **Michael Zvi** wailed his entry into the world at the Engelwood Hospital in New Jersey. Mom, **Tami**, and dad, **Randy**, were thrilled.

On May 26, eight days following this joyous arrival was the brit. Congregation Shaare Zedek, of West New York, N.J., was the scene. It's the Orthodox synagogue where the family holds membership.

On the bima infant Michael placed on an embroidered pillow with matching coverlet was carried reverently by **Rabbi Mates Friesel**, from New York City and a friend of the mother's family, accompanied by **Rabbi David Movsae**, who spiritually heads Shaare Zedek, a Yeshiva U. graduate and father of two toddler girls and **Martin Bock**, president of the congregation, and the mohel. Dad, **Randy Herschaft**, was part of that august procession.

Sitting on one of the tall arm chairs reserved for synagogue's leadership was the Zondick: my husband, **Jack**, grandfather of



Jean Herschaft with grandson, Michael on the occasion of his brith at Congregation Shaare Zedek, West New York.

the bundle, Michael, who was tenderly placed by the mohel, **Rabbi David Kdemi**, of Englewood, N.J. on his lap, preparatory to circumcision.

Pint-sized Michael, who had weighed in at birth at 7 lbs., 3 oz., was outfitted by mom Tami. It was a one-piece baseball-embazoned white suit with bright colored motifs to make the Yankee team proud. Snaps that opened in the proper places made it simple for Mohel Kdemi. With a kosher wine bottle on hand, the infant's lips were brushed with just a glimmer of the sweet liquid. No anesthesia in the traditional way. A tiny white yarmulke perched on his head by Kdemi at the inception.

Shaare Zedek's separate seating had we females on the left of the bima and the males in the center and right aisles. Thus Tami, her mom, **Sims Berkovits**, her sister, **Isralla**, the latter two having jetted in from their home in Israel to attend this momentous event, me and Michael's 22-month-old sister, **Miriam**, were on the left, eyes all glued on the bima. As the tall

Continued on page 14

One Woman's Voice

Jew on a Catholic pilgrimage

By MIRIAM ZIMMERMAN

Preparing for a talk show interview is not like preparing for a lecture. A lecture is linear, one point logically follow-



ing another. But a guest on a talk show is at the mercy of the host's stream of associations.

I was invited to be a guest of Father Miles Riley, host of "For Heaven's Sake," to discuss my experiences studying in Jerusalem under the aegis of the National Catholic Center for Holocaust Education. The show airs on San Francisco's local NBC affiliate on Sunday mornings at 5 a.m. The early morning hour will help me determine who my real friends are.

The National Catholic Center for Holocaust Education (NCCHE), founded 12 years ago by two Sisters of Charity, Sister Gemma Del Duca, S.C., and Sister Mary Noel Kernan, S.C., was the first of its kind at a Catholic institution of higher education. Located at Seton Hill College in Greensburg, Pa., the Center has as its primary purpose "the broad dissemination of scholarship on the root causes of anti-Semitism, its relation to the Holocaust, and the implications from the Catholic perspective of both for today's world."

Last spring, I applied for and was granted a full tuition scholarship and a generous stipend to attend the Center's Summer Institute in Israel. I qualify because I teach a course on the Holocaust at a Catholic college. I can hear my readers exclaiming, "What, she went to Israel to learn about the Holocaust from Catholics?"

The Center, in partnership with Yad Vashem, the Israeli Holocaust and Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, sends participants to the International School for Holocaust Educators located on the Yad Vashem campus in Jerusalem. Most of the faculty were not only professors at Hebrew University or other

Israeli universities but also were the recognized experts in their fields. For example, Professor Moshe David Herr lectured on ancient and medieval anti-Semitism and Professor Robert Wistrich on modern anti-Semitism.

Ilan Avisar's talk on propaganda films as used by the Nazis was of particular interest to me because I offer communication credit for my Holocaust students. David Bankier lectured not only on anti-Semitism but also on Nazi racial ideology and the Final Solution. Gershon Shaked discussed the literature of the Holocaust with an emphasis on the works of Aron Appelfeld.

Woven into the curriculum were 13 survivor testimonies. A total of 28 professors delivered three lectures a day, six days a week, for three and a half weeks. The curriculum culminated in lectures by Yehuda Bauer, noted Holocaust historian. My reward for this academic marathon was six units of graduate credit in anti-Semitism and Holocaust studies.

Three days before the taping, the producer of Father Riley's show called. She reminded me that I would talk about my experiences studying in Israel, the only Jew in a Catholic group: retracing the steps of Jesus, attending mass in a Benedictine monastery, the stations of the Cross, and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

We had clarified this agenda before. Where did the concern in her voice come from, I wondered. Was Father Riley having second thoughts about inviting a Holocaust educator on his program?

Well, she said hesitantly, in response to my query, I sent Father Riley some of your articles from the National Jewish Post and Opinion. In one of them, you quoted Hitler, "We only finished what the Catholic Church began."

I assured the producer I would never quote Hitler, at least not that quote, on a Catholic program. She emphasized that I should tell my stories, that I was the story. Just remember, she admonished gently, no political agendas. This is a spiritual program. There was so much I wanted to say about my expe-

riences at Yad Vashem, learning about the Holocaust with a group of Catholics matched by a corresponding group comprised mostly of Jews and brought together by Yad Vashem. Together, the two groups totaled 47 individuals from seven different countries. We laughed and cried together, visited the old city of Jerusalem, bartered in the Arab shuk, observed Shabbat, prayed in a variety of synagogues, floated in the Dead Sea together, and studied the Holocaust in depth.

Seton Hill College initiated this national Catholic movement toward Holocaust studies in response to the urging of Pope John Paul II to recognize the significance of the Shoah [Hebrew for Holocaust], and to "promote the necessary historical and religious studies on this event which concerns the whole of humanity today." This quote from Pope John Paul II was written in May, 1987.

Pope John Paul II has done more to further Catholic-Jewish relations than any other pope in history. I wondered if it would be too political for me to mention some of the many firsts that occurred during his papacy: he was the first pope to go to a synagogue to pray, the first pope to visit Auschwitz, the first to host a Yom HaShoah commemorative service at the Vatican. He has consistently and authentically reached out to the Jewish community on all levels. His most important accomplishment was the Vatican's recognition of the State of Israel. He even provides financial means for Catholics to study the Holocaust.

Per my request, the NCCHE arranged a roommate for me. Mary Beth Woolf and I spoke long distance before the Institute. "Did you receive a scholarship?" she asked.

I replied in the affirmative. "Did yours come from the pope, too?" she added.

"No," I replied, somewhat in awe, "mine came from the Center. Did yours come from the pope?"

"Yes," she answered simply, "directly from the Vatican." I wondered what it would be like to live with a woman who warranted a pa-

Continued on next page

It's Arlene Peck!

Late starters can be lonely

By ARLENE PECK

I've decided that there is really something weird about living out here in Los Angeles.

Maybe it's just the times



that we're in. How many of you remember when our president worried about his conflicts with Fidel instead of his battles with fidelity? Times are so confusing today that when everything is going well, you just don't know what the heck is going on. Conscience is what hurts when everything else feels so good.

When my father was in the Second World War he was a grownup. When the war was over, he, like most of the other men in Atlanta, returned home to finish school, start families and achieve in business. I believe the word they lived their lives was called responsibility. They counted their blessings then instead of calories.

The Jewish community of Atlanta thrived and by the time men had reached 30 they were involved in life — they were grown-ups. Today, when it comes to maturity levels, men can be compared to government bonds. Except, the bonds eventually mature.

Which brings me to the attitude that I've come to know so well out here in the shadow of Beverly Hills. I'm astounded at the comments that I hear from women who are a little long in the tooth and inching toward 50. While "doing lunch" they become morose and suddenly notice that they forgot to get married or have children. At that point, they usually fling back their mousse hair, toss a manicured hand back through it and announce "I think I'll have a child". Good lord, by the time we were 25 in the South, the rule was to have your LAST child. Mothers AND fathers actually raised their children.

Today, it's the mothers and fathers who are the children. They are out looking for love

in all the wrong places. I actually think if some of these people had had children, they would have eaten them.

People who ought to know better are just so burnt-out and jaded in the game of love that they go out of their way in relationship avoidance. The attitude pretty much seems to be, "If at first you don't succeed, give up." It's just no use being perceived as a damn fool. If falling in love is awfully simple, then falling out of love is simply awful!

And yet, every week

mother I changed my mind and wasn't going to get married. And, if I ever got a divorce it would be her fault. She turned me around, marched me down to the chuppa all the while telling me, "It's better to be a has been than a 'never was.'" Men won't want you if you've never married, she said. Which, in retrospect has a great deal of truth to it. As the years go by, you get so damned set in your ways that nobody can satisfy you.

However, singles places

People who ought to know better are just so burnt-out and jaded in the game of love that they go out of their way in relationship avoidance. The attitude pretty much seems to be, "If at first you don't succeed, give up." It's just no use being perceived as a damn fool. If falling in love is awfully simple, then falling out of love is simply awful! And yet, every week they're out there looking to find "that special one" at singles places. I know that many of you out there would dispute me. However, I am firmly convinced that singles places will keep you single. I remember when I was ready to walk down the aisle at my own wedding. I peeked out the curtain and saw all my old boyfriends there. I told my mother I changed my mind and wasn't going to get married.

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I remember when I was ready to walk down the aisle at my own wedding. I peeked out the curtain and saw all my old boyfriends there. I told my

aren't the way to go. I truly believe that the only thing that men have in common whom you might meet at a singles bar is that they are all married. Of course the wife at home thinks he's out bowling with the boys or, at a business conference. I personally think only a widow knows for sure where her husband is.

Zimmerman

Continued from prev. page
pal scholarship. What should I do about my secular, Reform Jewish sensibility and my sometimes irreverent sense of humor?

On weekends, the Seton Hill group visited churches and monasteries, traveled to the Mount of Beatitudes in the Galilee, and retraced the stations of the cross along the Via Dolorosa in the Old City of Jerusalem. This was my fourth visit to Israel; I had no idea it was home to so many churches, monasteries, and Christian shrines.

Now I understand how different tourist groups, Jewish and Christian, can visit Israel and experience two different countries. In the Seton Hill group, there were three seminarians and one parish priest. It wasn't your average group of tourists. Sister Gemma led our excursions into Terra Sancta, Christian Israel.

I related the story on camera to Father Riley of our retracing the final steps of Jesus. Sr. Gemma carried a much-used Christian bible, with a profusion of yellow post-it notes protruding from a variety of pages. Thus, when we paused at one of the stations of the cross, the group didn't have to wait for her to find the relevant passage. She called on one of the seminarians or Father Jim to read.

I could feel the group's collective spiritual IQ rise to at least 160 after each reading. But accompanying us, scholars that we all were, was an archaeologist from Ben Gurion University of the Negev. He was a former monk turned academician.

"Of course, there is no scientific evidence that this is, in fact, the site of the resurrection," he clarified. Or, "no archaeological evidence proves that this is, in fact, Calvary." I could feel the group's spiritual IQ crash to the rock bottom level of scientific understanding. We were on a spiritual seesaw.

"But," he concluded at each station, restoring our spirituality somewhat, "according to centuries of Christian faith and Christian tradition, this is where Jesus was crucified." Or, "this is the Stone of Unction, where for centuries Christian pilgrims have believed that this is where the body was placed after having been taken down from the cross to be washed."

A Jewish custom: to wash the body before burial. The

essential Jewishness of Jesus was brought home to me many times during this pilgrimage.

In the Galilee, we visited Capernaum, home of St. Peter, located near a synagogue dating to the first century. Built over remnants of the ancient village of Capernaum is a modern Franciscan church, constructed on stilt-like legs. It looks like a toy space ship belonging to a giant such as Samson. A fence kept us from wandering among the excavated ruins under the church. But visitors can peer down into the archaeological diggings and see how Galileans lived in the first century.

At high noon, the enormous church failed to provide relief from the relentless Galilean sun. The group tacitly adhered to the 11th Commandment for tourists: thou shalt ask no questions of the tour guide on a long afternoon of sightseeing when the air conditioning in the bus wasn't working properly, and there were no available bathrooms because the church was closed to the public.

As a feminist, I have trained myself to "hear" the omitted. This time, there were no disclaimers by the tour guide that St. Peter's house, site of at least two miracles, was determined by centuries of Christian faith and tradition. Despite the sticky heat and the 11th Commandment, I felt compelled to ask, "Does this mean that that house was, in fact, the home of St. Peter?"

The guide explained that that particular house had graffiti on one of its walls indicating that this room was where the miracles had occurred. Scientists have declared the graffiti to be authentic, dating to the first century. Thus, according to science and not to faith, it was determined that that was the home of St. Peter. Whether or not those miracles took place is another issue, he added wryly.

Two thousand years later, I pondered the meaning of the word "miracle" for inhabitants of those tiny rooms. Was it any more than the unexpected recovery of a woman who had been given up for dead? Savoring the awe I experienced while gazing into the home of St. Peter, I was the last to join the group retracing the path to the bus, bound for a comfortable kibbutz where we would spend the night.

It was hard to feel spiritual

Continued on next page

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Zimmerman

Continued from prev. page
in the stifling heat when one's body was too attuned to its physiological needs for water and relief. But my brain kept echoing the words that that house was the home of St. Peter, site of those miracles.

Writing an article is a lot like preparing a lecture. One has the luxury of editing, pruning or adding detail, in order to fully explain a complex situation. Unlike on Father Riley's program where I was hesitant to volunteer much information lest I inadvertently offend. For Father Riley, I easily described the spiritual seesaw I experienced along the stations of the cross and in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. But I answered his

questions and didn't allow my associations to intrude on his. Thus, I omitted much of the awe I felt while visiting these shrines holy to a faith not my own.

I omitted the intensity I experienced upon walking into the tomb of Jesus, large enough to accommodate only five or six at a time, where two of the student priests were knelt in prayer. It was their intense piety and deep prayer that was so powerful for me. I also didn't include my response to a beautiful mass experienced at a Benedictine monastery just outside Jerusalem during which the monks and nuns sang a cappella throughout the service, or my awe while gazing at the home

of St. Peter.

I would never be anything other than the Reform Jew that I am. But making this pilgrimage with these devout Catholics to their holiest shrines while studying the Holocaust with them has changed me in profound ways. I understand more clearly that all of us have religious needs for which our respective religions provide relief. Instead of Homo sapiens, our species would be more aptly described as Homo religiosus.

To fully comprehend and appreciate another religion, I believe one has to experience such intense awe as I experienced, a process of discovery not to be recommended for impressionable children, but to be required for thoughtful adults, committed to religious tolerance.

These subtleties were not adequately communicated by me on Father Riley's talk show. Fortunately, the print medium of the P & O allows me to clarify and paint a more complete picture than the visually dependent medium of unscripted, unedited television affords.

Kopleowitz in Cleveland Post

JOHANNESBURG — A leading professional of the South African Board of Deputies, Seymour Kopleowitz, its national director, has announced he will be leaving for Cleveland where his new post will be in the education department of the Jewish Federation.

Warsaw's rabbi

Mazal tov! Warsaw, which once teemed with thousands of Jews now has a rabbi. He is Baruch Rabinovitch, in his 20s, a native of Russia, who studied in Denmark and Israel. He and his young wife both speak Polish.

His congregation, numbering a few hundred souls, is financially supported by the JDC and the Ronald Lauder Foundation. (Jacob London, in the *Forward*).

Rabbi Sam Silver may be reached at 15436 Strathearn Dr., Delray Beach, FL 33446.

Silver

Continued from page 10
"Look, if I don't help my own brother do you expect me to help a lot of strangers?"

Missing Bibi

Understandably, the editor of the Orthodox weekly, the *Algemeiner Journal*, is disappointed that Bibi lost. He expresses the hope that Barak will follow through on the statement he made: that we want a government that will reflect the outlook of all people, the traditionalists and the non-traditionalists.

The editor, Gershon Jacobson, feels that one reason for Likud's loss is that its members failed to cultivate the Russians in Israel. Many of them were not religious, and some Likudniks tended to

look down on them. Instead, says the editor, they should try to win them over in friendly fashion to a more religious stance.

Herschaft

Continued from page 12

chairs were placed with their backs to the gathering, the brit was by design not visible. But, alas, the squealing howls announced that Michael had entered the covenant. The infant's cries were just momentary. Jack later reported to us that Michael took the event like a "pro" even the lusty singing that rang forth from all on the bima, Hebrew melodies with traditional lyrics of joy did not awaken Michael as he dozed off to slumberland after the ritual.

In the center aisle sat 5-year-old Bar, the son of Isralla, who had jetted in with his mom on El Al for the exciting event. Both she and grandma Sims had also been assisting in caring for Michael as mom, Tami, regained her strength.

A kosher catered dairy reception glowed on the lower level of Shaari Zedek with tables beckoning the guests, who included many friends and neighbors of the immediate family. Sister, Miriam, at 22 months, was a gracious hostess, greeting the many children of the guests with special candy treats. Garbed in a one-piece ivory/pink flowered light fabric new dress, Miriam's smile spelled out her innate knowledge that this was a very special time.

The time it was held was 5 p.m., guests arriving at 4:30. The usual early morning for such happy brits was scrapped by the parents in deference to Jack and me, as we had to travel in from



(l-r) Infant Michael Zvi Herschaft on pillow held by Rabbi Mates Friesel, Rabbi David Moosas, Rabbi of Congregation Shaare Zedek of West New York, New Jersey and dad, Randy Herschaft on the bima where circumcision was held, May 26.

Brooklyn and anticipate the grueling road tie-ups. More than 200 guests made it.

The circumcision was done in the old-fashioned way... the traditional way, Rabbi Kdemi, the mohel advised us that he performs only traditional circumcisions and that, contrary to the latest bugaboo about anesthesia injected infants prior to the project, no parents engaging him had requested change nor would he adhere to such a blasphemy.

"Two weeks ago I performed a circumcision on the infant son of a top specialist at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York... in the old fashioned and only way for a Jewish infant." He then pointed to our Michael... the proof of the pudding... that after the first few seconds of howling, he didn't even whimper. No pain. No danger to his health.

"But a boy of 6 months and older circumcised would sustain pain that infants do not," he added, to be fair.

Rabbi Kdemi, a practitioner of many years, is known as the top mohel in these parts of New Jersey, Randy and Tami had been told by many in inquiries that they had made on the credentials of mohels.

As for our grandson, Michael, he has a rugged handsomeness that proclaims him a real boy. Mazel Tov!

Mystery Person

Do you know who's who?

- The Mystery Person was naturalized in 1943.
- The Mystery Person was chairman of his local federation and is a member of the board of the UJA.

All Mystery Persons are limited to North American Jews. Winners of the Mystery Person contest will receive a two-month subscription, the equivalent of \$8 if not a subscriber, or, if a subscriber, a two-month extension of their subscription. Once appearing in the contest, that same individual will not be repeated as a Mystery Person. All correct answers are considered winners, not only the first received.



Letters

Barak won't do major changes

Dear Editor,

Ehud Barak was not even elected before some of the ridiculous predictions of radical changes in Israel-diaspora relations began to show up in the press. This is a regular occurrence now, as is the increasingly silly behavior of certain Jewish organizations that can't distinguish between the trivial and the significant and exert great amounts of energy and financial resources to fight meaningless battles. Paradoxically, it seems the more power Jews acquire, the less many of them understand politics.

A number of stories have appeared suggesting that Barak's election will result in a revolution in the way the Israeli government deals with American Jewry. In particular, the left-wing pro-peace organizations are now supposed to suddenly dominate the U.S.-Israel relationship and the allegedly right-wing, and, by implication, anti-peace groups, will be pushed aside. This idea is fed by remarks by people in the Labor Party suggesting that organizations like AIPAC, who they see as tied to the Likud, will no longer have a major role in lobbying for Israel. This is poppycock.

AIPAC is the principal component of the Israeli lobby and that will not change. The left-wing groups do not have the resources — members, contacts, or money — to supplant it. AIPAC supports whichever government is in power, usually to the consternation of the opposition, and will make a 180-degree (actually a fraction of that is required) shift in its position to reflect the views of the new Prime Minister. Many Israelis simply don't understand the U.S. political system or how AIPAC operates. I still remember having lunch with three of the young princes of Labor, who shared a disdain for AIPAC, and recall coming away with the realization that they didn't have a clue about the organization or its milieu.

AIPAC and the other establishment groups will enthusiastically support Barak because they want to see the peace process move forward and U.S.-Israel tensions eased. No one is going to question Barak's credentials or commit-

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ment to Israeli security. He lacks Bibi's charisma, but, by the end of his term, Netanyahu's formidable communication skills were no longer helping him make his case in the United States. A duller, less articulate Prime Minister with more popular policies should do much better. It worked for Yitzhak Rabin.

It is not just Israelis who don't understand American politics, many Jews here are equally misguided. In some cases, their actions aren't just foolish, but counterproductive. This is particularly true of the Jewish pit bulls who attack anyone who disagrees with them and are unable to distinguish between friends, foes, and enemies that are dangerous.

The latest example of the pit bulls getting out of control involved the campaign against Joseph Zogby, a low-level aide to Martin Indyk, the assistant secretary for Near Eastern Affairs. Zogby's father is one of Israel's most persistent critics, a guy with no constituency or influence, but a good publicist. The son apparently shares his father's views and therefore was viewed as a dark influence at the State Department. In reality, Zogby was a minor figure with zero influence. Sure he's got a bias, so does everyone else working in Middle East affairs at State, and many are equally or more hostile to Israel. It is the career diplomats and political appointees, however, who have the influence, so why pick on this guy?

Zogby was already planning to take a position at a different government agency, so the campaign only provoked him to consider staying to spite his opponents. It also created a backlash because Zogby's defenders could say the only Arab-American at State was being persecuted for his views. Zogby did leave, and I'm sure the pit bulls will claim credit for cleansing the State Department. Of course, they never succeeded in getting rid of Indyk, the official who does have influence, who was also accused of hostility toward Israel, despite the fact that his whole political career grew out of his work with AIPAC.

The lack of perspective in the Jewish community is becoming frightening. Some people can't distinguish be-

tween the threat posed by a swastika painted on a bathroom wall and a bomb being placed in a Jewish agency building. We see this all the time with the self-appointed media monitors. Every negative report or factual error is not an indication of anti-Israel bias, a media crusade against the Jews or a shift in public perceptions of Jews and Israel. Sure we should demand accuracy and expect fairness, but a lot of the problems are just not that important.

Do you realize that despite the horrible media bias, the hostility of the Clinton Administration to the Netanyahu government, the Arabists in the State Department, the "self-hating" Jews in the State Department and all the rest of the variables conspiring against us, Americans sympathize with Israelis over Palestinians by more than three to one and that public approval of Israel is the highest it's been since 1991?

We have to fight for what we believe, and stand up against injustice and threats to the Jewish people and Israel. But we also need to know how to pick our fights, not just the ones that we can win, but the ones that truly matter. That is the sign of political maturity. We're not there yet.

Mitchell G. Bard
via e-mail

Reader quits over photo

Dear editor,

Many times in the past I have been compelled to write over stances you have taken and inflammatory articles you have published denigrating anyone who chooses to follow the path laid out by the Torah.

I have remained silent for the same reason I subscribe to your newspaper; that you publish something that I don't agree with, but that represents a point of view agreed with by many fellow Jews. A view that I choose to know, so as to be able to discuss it with an informed, if not totally open, mind. It is my view that while we are born Jewish, we are a nation of Jews by our acceptance of Torah. To violate the Torah is wrong, according to the Torah. Neither society nor modern thinking can change the fact that it is wrong. Modern times may make being "in

the wrong" (for lack of a better term) more acceptable, but it doesn't change wrong into right.

While I believe many of the platforms that define Reform Judaism are violations of Torah, I would be equally transgressive were I to deny anyone the right to practice our beautiful religion in any way they see fit. While I believe that Gan Eden will have us in two different levels, while on this earth we are all equal, each and every one of us. I would hope that you feel the same way too.

Which brings me to my point. While I "tolerate" your anti-observant views, and do in fact learn from them, I feel I can no longer receive your publication. I found it very offensive to see on page 3 of the May 12 edition an advertisement containing a picture of a half naked woman. Yes, I realize that it is a very famous and much admired piece of art. I will even grant you that it has its place in the world. Where its place should not have been was on the pages of a major Jewish weekly. I feel that it was totally inappropriate to use a picture such as that.

If you hope to have a readership across a broad spectrum of Jewish ideologies, you cannot print something that many would consider on the same level as some of the more unsavory four letter words.

An idea, an article, that I don't agree with, or may even consider vile, does not even approach the level of what I felt when I opened the paper and saw that. Lest you think I am out of touch with the happenings in the real world, I will tell you that I am a Federal Prisoner doing time for trying to stop Shimon Peres from giving a speech. I admit I was wrong, for trying to stop the goals that he was trying to achieve in the manner that I did, as well as for trying to stop free speech at all. But this, sir, is different. It exceeded the bounds of good taste, or even decency.

Just as I would not show a child of 8 or 10 a copy of *Playboy*, neither would I want him to see that photo. I think many of your observant readers feel the same way.

This being said, I feel I must register my protest in a most forceful manner. I regret to inform you that I am ask-

ing that my subscription be cancelled effective immediately. It pains me, as I have come to look forward to your newspaper each week, but I feel that I have no alternative. I cannot condone, through the continuance of my subscription, what has been done. Please return any unused portion of my subscription amount.

Harry Shapiro
PO Box 724 FCI B-2
Edgefield, SC 29824

Getting it right re: Coach Shyatt

Dear editor:

In your May 26, 1999 edition of the Jewish Post & Opinion, you included an article written by Harlen Abbey of the Cleveland Jewish News on Larry Shyatt, a college basketball coach. I would like to point out some inaccuracies in this article. Coach Shyatt is currently the head coach of Clemson University in South Carolina. He is not currently coaching the University of Wyoming. He has not been at the University of Wyoming for one year. This season at Clemson, Shyatt led the Tigers to a 20-15 record and an appearance in the NIT championship game.

In addition, there are not five Jewish head coaches in division I as you point out. There were in fact seven coaches at the helm of division I programs this season. The two additional Jewish coaches were Ron Ganulin at St. Francis (Brooklyn, NY) and Greg Polinsky at Georgia Southern University.

One other mistake is that Shyatt was the assistant coach at Clemson before arriving at Wyoming. You wrote that he was coaching at New Mexico before coming to Wyoming. Shyatt also coached at Providence College for six years as an assistant under Rick Barnes.

Scott Granowitz
JewishSports.com writer
<http://www.JewishSports.com>



Book Reviews

Reform spirituality examined

Reviewed by ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

Duties of the Soul (The Role of Commandments in Liberal Judaism), edited with an Introduction by Niles E. Goldstein and Peter S. Knobel, New York: UAHC Press, 1999 166 pp., \$12.00.

The hottest issue in Reform Judaism, putting aside same-gender marriages, revolves around the core question it has always faced — how does it relate to the central theme of Mitzvah (Commandment) which traditionally assumes God as the Commander of the 613 Mitzvot (Commandments).

The liberal movement has opted to follow the principle of individual autonomy with its inherent freedom of choice, at the expense of prescribed Mitzvot to be obeyed with the ethical ones exercising more authority than those expressed in ritual. This approach reflects the spirit of modernity shaped by the twin European forces of the Enlightenment and Emancipation.

However, recent years have witnessed a greater exploration of the larger body of tradition by Reform rabbis and their congregants, seeking to reinvigorate their religious lives and practice, rediscovering potential meaning in long discarded observances. The May 1999 convention of the CCAR (The Central Conference of American Rabbis) meeting in Pittsburgh affirmed the newly-crafted Statement of Principles for the Reform movement, attesting to the shift to respect and even encourage the trend toward tradition, though milder than early drafts suggested. It is no coincidence that there is an association with the Pittsburgh Platform of 1885 that has represented Classical Reform.

From increased use of kippot (skull caps), tallitot (prayer shawls), the mikveh (ritual bath) and the dietary laws, to more Hebrew in worship, and renewed emphasis on study, in addition to the Reform hallmarks of pursuing a creative, gender-sensitive liturgy, social action and interfaith work. Surely, the impact of the State of Israel, the influx of Conservative Jews into the Reform ranks, the yearning for spirituality — in the midst

of assimilation — in an Age of Reason proven lacking, have been potent factors.

The book is composed of contributions by a small group of well-known rabbis who formed the Reform Roundtable in 1996, dedicated to the sacred review of the interaction between Reform and tradition with an eye to enlarging the latter's role in the unfolding of the former. One of the members, Rabbi Eric H. Yoffie, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, who has stressed the centrality of Torah study, urges: "We are free, but we are also worried because we have no Moses to guide us... What is essential is a Reform rabbin-ate that speaks and feels a language of covenant and commandment, a Reform rabbin-

ate that is committed to Sinai and that can still feel the glow of those moments when we glimpsed the warmth of God's light."

Therein lies Reform's dilemma, even contradiction, as well as the empowering challenge.

The editors — participants of this revealing guide to the soul-searching of a significant movement in transition, not without a measure of disagreement and pain, are Rabbi Nile E. Goldstein of the Jewish Life Network and Rabbi Peter S. Knobel, the chairman of the CCAR Liturgy Committee.

Dr. Israel Zoberman is the rabbi of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

See pictures; ignore text

Reviewed by MORTON I. TEICHER

Israeli Painting, by Ronald Fuhrer, New York, Overlook Press, 1998. 260 pp., \$75.

The first and perhaps the most important thing to say about this coffee table-sized book is that it contains 237 full color illustrations. These are beautiful illustrations of Israeli art.

The narrative by Ronald Fuhrer is far less important. He is an art dealer in Tel Aviv who specializes in Israeli art and who set out to present Israeli painters. "From Post-Impressionism to Post-Zionism," actually from 1906 to 1997. His narrow narrative begins with the establishment of the Bezalel School by Boris Schatz in 1906 and ends with the Venice Biennale of 1997 where Sigalit Landau "demolished the interior space of a shipping container. There we have the entire route from beginning to end: from the dream of national home as Third Temple, up to the moment when the Israeli artist became aware of his own homelessness." This incomprehensible statement is typical of the gobbledygook that introduces the book and each of its sections.

The years between 1906 and 1997 are arbitrarily divided into six unequal periods that make little sense since

many of the artists whose work appears in one section are also exhibited in others. For example, Joseph Zaritsky is first represented by works from 1940 and 1947 and he then shows up again in 1981, cutting across several of Fuhrer's artificial time eras. Eighteen of Zaritsky's paintings are included, more than those of any other artist.

The book is redeemed by the 237 full-color illustrations. They are splendidly presented and they richly display one man's judgment about which Israeli artists merit special attention. Fuhrer has selected 49 Israeli artists and he makes the claim that they cover modern Israeli painting in depth.

His choices are clearly open to dispute since other critics might choose to highlight other Israeli artists. For example, he does not mention Yaakov Pins nor Albert Goldman, two of my favorite Israeli artists, thus proving that taste is in the eye of the beholder.

These reservations aside, *Israeli Painting* is a significant addition to the books on Israeli art. The publisher has done a fine job of reproducing the paintings in sumptuous color so that the reader can enjoy the book without regard to the text.

11 Jews are to compete in the NFL this season

NEW YORK — When the professional football season opens this fall there will be at least a dozen Jewish players earning their keep in the NFL, but without Harris Barton, former All-Pro of San Francisco, who retired last season because of injuries.

According to Harlan Abbey of the Buffalo Jewish Review the returning Jewish veterans include tight end Scott Slutzker of New Orleans, punter Josh Miller of Pittsburgh, lineman/long snapper Adam Schreiber of Atlanta, offensive lineman Alex Bernstein of the New York Jets, defensive end Mitch Marrow, who was injured last year at Carolina, and quarterback Jay Fiedler of Minnesota.

Added to the oldtimers this year are Denver's second-round draft pick Len Friedman and fifth-rounder Mike Rosenthal of the New York Giants.

Then there are free-agent invites quarterback Gus Ornstein of the St. Louis Rams and lineman Josh Taves of Oakland, while West Point captain Neil Ravitz will try out for several teams.

With the best chance of making a roster is Friedman, the 61st player taken in the draft and the seventh offensive lineman. The 6-foot-4 inch, 290 pound native of west Milford, N.J. started at both tackles and left guard during his years at Duke and was named Atlantic Coast conference Offensive Lineman of the Week in Duke's 44-10 win over Northwestern. His father, Michael, played both football and basketball at Wagner College and his goal is eventually to go to medical school.

Ravitz, West Point's co-captain (like Rosenthal) and an offensive tackle, made Conference USA's All-Star team and played against Notre Dame and Navy. At 6 feet 3 inches and 285 pounds he owes the Army five years which if he makes the NFL and shifts to reserve duty then requires two years of service.

Taves, at 6 feet-6 inches and 260 lbs., is a defensive end who played with the New England Patriots. He recently changed his name to Taves, the name of his mother's second husband.

Families to host Israeli athletes

MINNEAPOLIS — Many of the city's Jewish families will be housing young Israelis as 17 soccer players plus their eight coaches from Kiryat Ono will be competing in the soccer championship

here. In addition, homes are required for eight other Israelis who will be counselors at the JCC summer camp. It is expected that two of the Israelis will be housed in one home.

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